

dedicated stand-by command issued by the remote control is received and decoded in the hearing aid.

Many hearing aids today can be controlled by a remote control, which gives the user of the hearing aid an easier way to control the hearing aid. In some cases the user might also be able to power-off the hearing aid or change the state to a stand-by mode using the remote control, where the hearing aid turns off most processing, keeping power on at just a minimum of circuits sufficient to power up the hearing aid from the stand-by mode using the remote control.

Summary of the invention

For a lot of elderly people with a hearing loss the handling of hearing aids can be difficult, because they are small, so that it is not easy to manipulate control buttons or to visually recognize whether the hearing aids are turned on or off. Consequently a lot of elderly people do not turn off their hearing aids when they are not in use, which drains the battery quickly and decreases the life time of the batteries.

It is a feature of the present invention to provide a simple and easy way to power-off and power-on a hearing aid.

According to the invention, in a first aspect, this is achieved by the hearing aid as defined in claim 1 comprising a signal processor and an RF receiver for receiving commands wirelessly from an external device, said processor being adapted for at least two modes of operation, where the first mode is a stand-by mode and the second mode is an operational mode, wherein the processor is adapted to respond to a message received by the RF receiver by switching from the second mode into the first mode, and wherein the processor is adapted to respond to the absence of the message for a predetermined interval of time by switching from the first mode to the second mode.

By having a remote control sending a constant power-off command with a very short range, the hearing aid will power-off, when the hearing aid and the remote control are in close proximity of each other, for instance when they are stored together in their storage box, in a pocket, at the night stand, or elsewhere. Once the hearing aids are moved out of the short range, e.g. by being placed at the respective ears of the user, while the

remote control is placed in the pocket, the power-off command is no longer detected by the hearing aids, which then default to power up.

With the present invention, the user does not have to actively push a button on the hearing aid remote control or other external device associated with the hearing aid to power-off the hearing aid. The remote control or other associated device is constantly sending power-off commands to the hearing aid, however these commands are sent with such a low power, that the hearing aid will not detect the commands until the hearing aid is within a relatively short range of the external device, which might be around 10 cm or less. Once the hearing aid no longer detects the power-off command, the hearing aid automatically comes to life again and is fully operable.

It will be understood that although it is common to refer to a state of power-off, within the field of soft power switching artisans may find it more correct to refer to a sleep-mode, as some circuits are still powered, in order that the device is capable of responding to a command by waking up. Thus the device really has three states, normal operation, sleep mode, and completely un-powered mode. Un-powered mode will not be discussed further here, and within the context of the present disclosure, the term power-off mode will be used to designate the sleep mode, unless specifically indicated to the contrary.

The invention, in a second aspect, provides a hearing aid accessory device ~~as defined in claim 8~~ comprising remote control transmission means for sending commands to a hearing aid to switch at least one operational setting of said hearing aid, said remote control transmission means being adapted for continuously transmitting commands to said hearing aid for instructing the hearing aid to switch the operational mode, said commands being transmitted at a low level of power so as to limit the effective range of the commands.

The invention, in a third aspect, provides a method ~~as recited in claim 14~~ to control the operational mode of a hearing aid by an external remote control device, comprising adapting the hearing aid to respond to a message received by the hearing aid by switching from a mode of normal operation into a stand-by mode, and to respond to the absence of the message for a predetermined interval of time by switching from the stand-by mode into the mode of normal operation.

Further features and advantages will appear from the dependent claims.