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Camera module

Abstract

A camera module is provided. The camera module includes a housing unit; a carrier, accommodated in the housing unit, and configured to move in an optical axis direction; a lens module, accommodated in the carrier, and in which one or more lenses are disposed; and a buffer member disposed on a side surface of the carrier, and configured to protrude in a direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction, and having a length in the optical axis direction, wherein the side surface of the carrier, on which the buffer member is disposed, has a length extending in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

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Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

(1) This application claims the benefit under 35 USC § 119(a) of Korean Patent Application No. 10-2021-0191318 filed on Dec. 29, 2021, in the Korean Intellectual Property Office, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

BACKGROUND

1. Field

(2) The following description relates to a camera module.

2. Description of Related Art

(3) Recently, camera modules have been provided in portable electronic devices such as, but not limited to, tablet personal computers (PCs), laptop computers, as well as smartphones.

(4) Typically, the camera module that is implemented in the portable electronic device has an autofocus (AF) function or operation, and an optical image stabilization (OIS) function or operation, and a zoom function or operation added thereto.

(5) However, the camera module including various functions added thereto may have a complicated structure and a large size, and a large amount of flow noise may occur when the camera module is driven.

SUMMARY

(6) This Summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that is further described below in the Detailed Description. This Summary is not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended to be used as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter.

(7) In a general aspect, a camera module includes a housing unit; a carrier, accommodated in the housing unit, and configured to move in an optical axis direction; a lens unit, accommodated in the carrier, and in which one or more lenses are disposed; and a buffer member, disposed on a side surface of the carrier, and configured to protrude in a direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction, and having a length in the optical axis direction, wherein the side surface of the carrier, on which the buffer member is disposed, has a length that extends in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

(8) The housing unit may include a groove portion that extends in the optical axis direction, and configured to accommodate at least a portion of the buffer member.

(9) The buffer member may include a plurality of buffer members, and the plurality of buffer members are disposed on the side surface of the carrier in a first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

(10) The plurality of buffer members may include a first buffer member disposed to face the housing unit in the first direction.

(11) The plurality of buffer members further include a second buffer member disposed to face the housing unit in a second direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction and the first direction.

(12) The second buffer member may have a cross section perpendicular to the optical axis direction that is larger than the first buffer member.

(13) A distance between the housing unit and the buffer member in the optical axis direction may be less than a distance between the carrier and the housing unit in the optical axis direction.

(14) The housing unit may include a housing configured to accommodate the carrier; and a shield can that is coupled to the housing while the housing accommodates the carrier, and wherein the buffer member is configured to come into contact with the housing or the shield can when the

carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

(15) The buffer member may include a mounting portion coupled to the carrier; and a deformed portion, mounted on the mounting portion, and configured to deform when in contact with the housing unit when the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

(16) The deformed portion may have a symmetrical structure with respect to the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

(17) The camera module may further include a first actuator unit configured to move the carrier and the lens unit in the optical axis direction; and a second actuator unit configured to move the lens unit in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

(18) In a general aspect, a camera module includes a carrier configured to accommodate a lens unit; a housing configured to accommodate the carrier; a shield can coupled to the housing while the housing accommodates the carrier; and a buffer member disposed on a side surface of the carrier, and configured to protrude in a direction perpendicular to an optical axis direction, and having a length in the optical axis direction, wherein the carrier is configured to move relative to the housing and the shield can in the optical axis direction, and wherein the buffer member is configured to come into contact with the shield can or the housing when the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

(19) A distance between the buffer member and the shield can in the optical axis direction may be less than a distance between the carrier and the shield can in the optical axis direction.

(20) The housing may include a groove portion that extends in the optical axis direction, and wherein the groove portion accommodates at least a portion of the buffer member.

(21) A distance between the buffer member and the groove portion in the optical axis direction may be less than a distance between the carrier and the housing in the optical axis direction.

(22) The buffer member may include a first buffer member disposed to face the shield can in a first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction; and a second buffer member disposed to face the shield can in a second direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction and the first direction.

(23) Other features and aspects will be apparent from the following detailed description, the drawings, and the claims.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

(1) FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective view of an example camera module, in accordance with one or more embodiments.

(2) FIG. 2 illustrates a schematic exploded perspective view of an example camera module, in accordance with one or more embodiments.

(3) FIG. 3 illustrates an exploded view of the camera module of FIG. 1 from which a housing unit is disassembled.

(4) FIG. 4 illustrates a cut-away perspective view taken along line I-I' of the camera module of FIG. 1.

(5) FIG. 5 illustrates a perspective view of the camera module of FIG. 4 from which a shield can is removed.

(6) FIGS. 6A and FIG. 6B illustrate respective exploded views of regions A and B of FIGS. 4 and 5.

(7) FIGS. 7A and 7B illustrate conceptual diagrams showing that a buffer member is deformed while the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

(8) Throughout the drawings and the detailed description, the same reference numerals may refer to the same, or like, elements. The drawings may not be to scale, and the relative size, proportions,

and depiction of elements in the drawings may be exaggerated for clarity, illustration, and convenience.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

(9) The following detailed description is provided to assist the reader in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the methods, apparatuses, and/or systems described herein. However, various changes, modifications, and equivalents of the methods, apparatuses, and/or systems described herein will be apparent after an understanding of the disclosure of this application. For example, the sequences of operations described herein are merely examples, and are not limited to those set forth herein, but may be changed as will be apparent after an understanding of the disclosure of this application, with the exception of operations necessarily occurring in a certain order. Also, descriptions of features that are known, after an understanding of the disclosure of this application, may be omitted for increased clarity and conciseness, noting that omissions of features and their descriptions are also not intended to be admissions of their general knowledge.

(10) The features described herein may be embodied in different forms, and are not to be construed as being limited to the examples described herein. Rather, the examples described herein have been provided merely to illustrate some of the many possible ways of implementing the methods, apparatuses, and/or systems described herein that will be apparent after an understanding of the disclosure of this application.

(11) Although terms such as “first,” “second,” and “third” may be used herein to describe various members, components, regions, layers, or sections, these members, components, regions, layers, or sections are not to be limited by these terms. Rather, these terms are only used to distinguish one member, component, region, layer, or section from another member, component, region, layer, or section. Thus, a first member, component, region, layer, or section referred to in examples described herein may also be referred to as a second member, component, region, layer, or section without departing from the teachings of the examples.

(12) Throughout the specification, when an element, such as a layer, region, or substrate, is described as being “on,” “connected to,” or “coupled to” another element, it may be directly “on,” “connected to,” or “coupled to” the other element, or there may be one or more other elements intervening therebetween. In contrast, when an element is described as being “directly on,” “directly connected to,” or “directly coupled to” another element, there can be no other elements intervening therebetween. Likewise, expressions, for example, “between” and “immediately between” and “adjacent to” and “immediately adjacent to” may also be construed as described in the foregoing.

(13) The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular examples only, and is not to be used to limit the disclosure. As used herein, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. As used herein, the term “and/or” includes any one and any combination of any two or more of the associated listed items. As used herein, the terms “include,” “comprise,” and “have” specify the presence of stated features, numbers, operations, elements, components, and/or combinations thereof, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, numbers, operations, elements, components, and/or combinations thereof. The use of the term “may” herein with respect to an example or embodiment (for example, as to what an example or embodiment may include or implement) means that at least one example or embodiment exists where such a feature is included or implemented, while all examples are not limited thereto.

(14) Unless otherwise defined, all terms, including 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 consistent with and after an understanding of the present disclosure. Terms, such as those defined in commonly used dictionaries, are to be interpreted as having a meaning that is consistent with their meaning in the context of the relevant art and the present disclosure, and are not to be interpreted in an idealized or overly formal sense unless expressly so defined herein.

(15) The following description relates to a camera module, and may be applied to any of various types of portable electronic devices such as, but not limited to, a mobile communications terminal, a smartphone or a tablet personal computer (PC), as only examples.

(16) The camera module is an optical device (hereinafter, an actuator) that captures an image or a video, and may include a lens that refracts light reflected from a subject and a lens driving device that moves the lens to adjust a focus or stabilize the image.

(17) One or more examples may provide a camera module which reduces flow noise occurring when the camera module is moved in an optical axis direction.

(18) FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective view of an example camera module, in accordance with one or more embodiments, and FIG. 2 illustrates a schematic exploded perspective view of an example camera module, in accordance with one or more embodiments.

(19) Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, a camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may include a housing unit **100**, a lens unit **200**, an actuator unit **300** or **400**, and an image sensor unit **600**, and a buffer member **500** that reduces a flow noise when the lens unit **200** is driven.

(20) The housing unit **100** may include a housing **110** and a shield can **120**.

(21) The housing **110** may be formed of a material that is easily molded. As a non-limiting example, the housing **110** may be made of plastic.

(22) The housing **110** may accommodate the lens unit **200** and the actuator units **300** and **400**.

(23) The housing **110** may have an inner space and the top, bottom and all or some parts of four sides of the housing may be open. The housing **110** may accommodate the lens unit **200** and the actuator units **300** and **400** in the inner space and the open part.

(24) For example, the lens unit **200** may be disposed in the inner space of the housing **110**, and the actuator units **300** and **400** may be disposed in the inner space of the housing **110** and the open part of the housing **110**. Additionally, the image sensor unit **600** may be disposed at the open part of the bottom of the housing **110**.

(25) The shield can **120** may be coupled to the housing **110** to surround the housing **110**.

(26) The shield can **120** may protect components accommodated in the housing **110** from impacts.

(27) Additionally, the shield can **120** may shield the components accommodated in the housing **110** from electromagnetic waves. For example, the shield can **120** may ensure that the electromagnetic waves occurring in the camera module **1000** does not affect another electronic component in the portable electronic device. On the other hand, the shield can **120** may ensure that the electromagnetic waves occurring in another electronic component mounted in the portable electronic device does not affect the camera module **1000**.

(28) In an example, the shield can **120** may be made of a metal material to shield the electromagnetic waves, and may be grounded into a ground pad of a printed circuit board **620** on which an image sensor **610** of the image sensor unit **600** described below is disposed.

(29) The lens unit **200** may include a lens barrel **210** and a lens holder **220**.

(30) One or more lenses that capture an image of a subject may be disposed in the lens barrel **210**. One or more required lenses having the same or different optical properties (e.g., refractive indices) may be disposed in the lens barrel **210**.

(31) The lens barrel **210** may have a shape of a hollow cylinder, and may have an inner space, and the lens barrel **210** may accommodate one or more lenses in the inner space. The inner space of the lens barrel **210** may be determined based on the number of lenses disposed in the lens barrel **210**, and one or more lenses may be mounted inside the lens barrel **210** along an optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(32) The lens holder **220** may be coupled to the lens barrel **210**. For example, the lens holder **220** may be coupled to the lens barrel **210** while surrounding the lens barrel **210**. The lens holder **220** may have a space in which the lens barrel **210** is inserted, and the lens barrel **210** may be fixed to the space of the lens holder **220**.

(33) The lens holder **220** may guide movement of the lens barrel **210**. The lens barrel **210** may be moved to the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) or a direction (or X-axis or Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction while being coupled to the lens holder **220**.

(34) A frame **221** may be disposed at the bottom of the lens holder **220**. For example, the frame **221** may be disposed between the lens holder **220** and a carrier **310** described below. That is, the lens holder **220**, the frame **221** and the carrier **310** may be arranged in order based on the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(35) Some components included in the second actuator **400** described below may be disposed on the lens holder **220** and the frame **221**. For example, a magnet that generates a driving force to move or drive the lens barrel **210** in the optical axis direction (or the X-axis or the Y-axis direction) may be disposed in the lens holder **220**, and ball members that guide movement of the lens barrel **210** in the direction (or the X-axis or the Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction may be disposed on the frame **221**. Details related thereto are described below.

(36) In an example, the camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may further include a stopper **230** to prevent deviation of the components caused by an external impact.

(37) The stopper **230** may be coupled to the carrier **310** to cover at least a portion of an upper surface of the lens holder **220**.

(38) The stopper **230** may prevent the frame **221**, a plurality of ball members **330** and the like, as well as the lens holder **220** from being deviated outward from the carrier **310** by a rapid movement or by an external impact. Additionally, the stopper **230** may include a damper (not shown) on its surface facing the lens holder **220** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) to reduce a noise occurring when the lens holder **220** or the like is shaken by the external impact.

(39) The actuator units **300** and **400** may be the first actuator unit **300** to perform an autofocusing (AF) operation, and the second actuator unit **400** to perform an optical image stabilization (OIS) operation.

(40) The camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may include one or more of the first actuator unit **300** and the second actuator unit **400**, and may include both the first actuator unit **300** and the second actuator unit **400**.

(41) The first actuator unit **300** may be a component that moves the lens unit **200** to focus on the subject.

(42) The first actuator unit **300** may include the carrier **310** and a first driver **320**. The carrier **310** may be accommodated in the housing **110** and accommodate the lens unit **200**, and the first driver **320** may generate the driving force to move the lens unit **200** and the carrier **310** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(43) The first driver **320** may include a magnet and a coil (hereinafter, a first magnet **321** and a first coil **322**).

(44) In one or more examples, the first magnet **321** may be disposed on one surface of the carrier **310**, and the first coil **322** may be disposed in the housing **110**. The first coil **322** may be disposed in the open part of the housing **110** through a substrate **130**, and may be disposed to oppose the first magnet **321**.

(45) The first magnet **321** may be a mobile member that is disposed on the carrier **310**, and may move together with the carrier **310** in the optical axis direction (Z-axis direction), and the first coil **322** may be a fixed member fixed to the housing **110**. However, the one or more examples are not limited thereto, and the positions of the first magnet **321** and the first coil **322** may be switched with each other, such that the first magnet **321** is a fixed member and the first coil **322** is a mobile member.

(46) The carrier **310** may be moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) by an electromagnetic force generated between the first magnet **321** and the first coil **322** when power is applied to the first coil **322**. The lens unit **200** may be accommodated in the carrier **310**, and the lens unit **200** may thus also be moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) as the

carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(47) That is, the carrier **310** and the lens unit **200** may be moved relative to the housing unit **100** based on the first driver **320** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) while being accommodated in the housing unit **100**.

(48) The carrier **310** may be smoothly moved by the ball members **330** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction). The ball members **330** may be disposed on the one surface of the carrier **310**, on which the first magnet **321** is disposed, and may be disposed on both sides of the first magnet **321**. The ball members **330** may be disposed between the carrier **310** and the housing **110** to reduce a friction force acting between the carrier **310** and the housing **110** when the carrier **310** is moved.

(49) A yoke **340** may be disposed on the housing **110**. The yoke **340** may be disposed to face the first magnet **321** while having the first coil **322** interposed therebetween.

(50) The yoke **340** may be a magnetic body, and an attraction force may act between the yoke **340** and the first magnet **321** in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis (the Z-axis direction). The ball member **330** may remain in contact with the carrier **310** and the housing **110** by the attraction force acting between the yoke **340** and the first magnet **321**.

(51) Additionally, the yoke **340** may also operate to focus on a magnetic force of the first magnet **321**. For example, the yoke **340** and the first magnet **321** may form a magnetic circuit. Accordingly, it is possible to prevent leakage of magnetic flux.

(52) In an example, although not shown in the drawings, the yoke **340** may be disposed between the carrier **310** and the first magnet **321**, and the yoke **340** may focus on the magnetic force of the first magnet **321** to prevent the leakage of the magnetic flux.

(53) A position sensor **350** may be disposed on the housing **110**. The position sensor **350** may be disposed in the open part of the side surface of the housing **110** through the substrate **130** together with the first coil **322**, and may be disposed to face the first magnet **321**.

(54) The camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may use a waste loop control method in which a position of the lens unit **200** is detected and a feedback is provided.

(55) The position sensor **350** may detect the position of the lens unit **200**. In an example, the position sensor **350** may be a hall sensor.

(56) An initial position of the lens unit **200** may be detected by the position sensor **350** when the camera module **1000** is powered on, and the lens unit **200** may be moved from the detected initial position to an initial setting position. In an example, the initial position may indicate the position of the lens unit **200** in the optical axis direction, and the initial setting position may indicate the position of the lens unit **200** where a focus of the lens unit becomes infinite.

(57) The lens unit **200** may be moved from the initial setting position to a target position based on a driving signal of a circuit element that provides the driving signal for the first driver **320**. The lens unit **200** may be moved in both directions in the optical axis direction, (the Z-axis direction), during a focusing process.

(58) The second actuator unit **400** may be a component for moving the lens unit **200** to correct a blurred image or an unstable video due to a factor such as a shaken user hand when capturing the image or video.

(59) The second actuator unit **400** may include a second driver **420** (**421**, **422**). The second driver **420** may generate a driving force to move the lens unit **200** in a direction (or X-axis or Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

(60) The second driver **420** may include a magnet and a coil (hereinafter, a second magnet or magnets **421** and a second coil **422**).

(61) In one or more examples, the second magnet(s) **421** may be disposed on one surface of the lens holder **220**. In an example, a plurality of second magnets **421** may be provided, and the plurality of second magnets **421** may be disposed on different surfaces of the lens holder **220**.

(62) The second coil **422** may be disposed on the housing **110**. In an example, a plurality of second coils **422** may be provided, and the plurality of second coils **422** may be disposed in the open part

of the side surface of the housing **110** through the substrate **130** to respectively face the plurality of second magnets **421**.

(63) The plurality of second magnets **421** may be displaced on the lens holder **220**, and may be moved in a direction (or X-axis or Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction, and the plurality of first coils **422** may be fixed members respectively fixed to the housing **110**.

However, the one or more examples are not limited thereto, and may include examples in which positions of the second magnet **421** and the second coil **422** are switched with each other, such that the second magnet **421** is a fixed member and the second coil **422** is a mobile member.

(64) The lens unit **200** may be moved in a direction (or X-axis or Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction by an electromagnetic force generated between the second magnet **421** and the second coil **422** when power is applied to the second coil **422**.

(65) Referring to the drawings, the second magnet **421** and the second coil **422** of the second driver **420**, which are disposed parallel to the Y-axis direction, may generate a driving force in the X-axis direction, and the second magnet **421** and the second coil **422**, which are disposed parallel to the X-axis direction, may generate a driving force in the Y-axis direction.

(66) That is, the lens unit **200** may be moved relative to the housing unit **100** by the second driver **420** in the direction (or X-axis or Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction while being accommodated in the housing unit **100** and the carrier **310**.

(67) The movement of the lens unit **200** based on the second driver **400** may be guided by ball members **430a** and **430b**.

(68) The ball members **430a** and **430b** may respectively be disposed between the lens holder **220** and the frame **221**, and between the frame **221** and the carrier **310**. That is, the ball members **430a** and **430b** may be disposed in two stages in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(69) The ball members **430a** and **430b** may support the lens holder **220** and the frame **221** while guiding the movement of the lens unit **200**. Additionally, the ball members **430a** and **430b** may also operate to maintain a distance between the lens holder **220**, the frame **221** and the carrier **310**.

(70) The ball members **430a** and **430b** may include the first ball members **430a** and the second ball members **430b**.

(71) The first ball members **430a** may include the plurality of ball members disposed between the frame **221** and the carrier **310**. The first ball members **430a** may guide the movements of the lens barrel **210**, the lens holder **220**, and the frame **221** in the X-axis direction.

(72) The second ball members **430b** may include the plurality of ball members disposed between the lens holder **220** and the frame **221**. The second ball members **430b** may guide the movements of the lens barrel **210** and the lens holder **220** in the Y-axis direction.

(73) The ball members **430a** and **430b** may roll when a driving force is generated by the second driver **420**. For example, guide grooves **440a** or **440b**, in which the respective ball members **430a** or **430b** are accommodated, may be positioned in opposite surfaces of the lens holder **220** and the frame **221**, or in opposite surfaces of the frame **221** and the carrier **310** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), and the ball members **430a** or **430b** may roll in the guide grooves **440a** or **440b**.

(74) The guide grooves **440a** or **440b** may include the first guide grooves **440a** or the second guide grooves **440b**.

(75) The first guide grooves **440a** may be positioned in one surface of the frame **221** and one surface of the carrier **310** opposite to each other in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), and the first ball members **430a** may be accommodated in the first guide groove **440a** and fitted between the frame **221** and the carrier **310**.

(76) The first ball members **430a** may roll in the first guide groove **440a** only in the X-axis direction when the driving force is generated by the second driver **420**. Accordingly, a plane shape of the first guide groove **440a** may be a rectangle having a length in the X-axis direction.

(77) The second guide grooves **440b** may be positioned in one surface of the lens holder **220** and

one surface of the frame **221** opposite to each other in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), and the second ball members **430b** may be accommodated in the second guide groove **440b** and fitted between the lens holder **220** and the frame **221**.

(78) The second ball members **430a** may roll in the second guide groove **440b** only in the Y-axis direction when the driving force is generated by the second driver **420**. Accordingly, a plane shape of the first guide groove **440b** may be a rectangle having a length in the Y-axis direction.

(79) A position sensor **450** may be disposed on the housing **110**. The position sensor **450** may be disposed in the open part of the side surface of the housing **110** through the substrate **130** together with the second coil **422**, and disposed to face the second magnet **421**.

(80) The camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may use a waste loop control method in which a position of the lens barrel **210** is detected and a feedback is provided.

(81) The position sensor **450** may detect the position of the lens barrel **210**. In an example, the position sensor **450** may be a hall sensor.

(82) A damper **460** may be disposed on the housing **110**. The damper **460** may be disposed in the open part of the side surface of the housing **110** through the substrate **130** together with the second coil **422** and the position sensor **450**, and may be disposed to face the second magnet **421**. The damper **460** may be disposed in a hollow portion of each of the plurality of second coils **422**.

(83) The damper **460** may prevent a direct collision between the second magnet **421** and the second coil **422** when the lens unit **200** is moved by the second driver **420** in a direction (or X-axis or Y-axis direction) perpendicular to the optical axis direction. Accordingly, the damper **460** may protrude toward the second magnet **421** more than the second coil **422**.

(84) The image sensor unit **600** may include an image sensor **610** and a printed circuit board **620**.

(85) The image sensor **610** may convert light incident through the lens unit **200** into an electrical signal. In an example, the image sensor **610** may be a charge coupled device (CCD) or a complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS).

(86) The electrical signal converted by the image sensor **610** may be output as the image through a display device of the portable electronic device.

(87) The image sensor **610** may be fixedly disposed on the printed circuit board **620**. The image sensor **610** may be electrically connected to the printed circuit board **620** through wire bonding.

(88) Although not shown in the drawings, the image sensor unit **600** may further include an infrared filter. The infrared filter may operate to block light in an infrared region in the light incident thereto through the lens unit **200**.

(89) In an example, the camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may include the buffer member **500** that reduces the flow noise when the lens unit **200** is driven.

(90) In one or more examples, the buffer member **500** may reduce the flow noise that occurs due to the collision of the carrier **310** or the lens unit **200** with the housing unit **100** when the carrier **310** or the lens unit **200** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(91) FIG. 3 illustrates an exploded view of the camera module of FIG. 1 from which the housing unit is disassembled.

(92) Referring to FIG. 3, the camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may include the buffer member **500**.

(93) The buffer member **500** (**510**, **520**) may be disposed on the carrier **310**. For example, the buffer member **500** may be disposed on a side surface of the carrier **310**, and may be disposed parallel to the first magnet **321** and the ball members **330**.

(94) The buffer member **500** may have a length in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction). The buffer member **500** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310** and may thus have a length in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(95) The buffer member **500** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310**, and may thus have a sufficient length in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) without being restricted by a driving distance of the carrier **310** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) or by an

increase in a height of the camera module **1000**.

(96) The buffer member **500** may be accommodated in the housing unit **100** while being disposed on the carrier **310**. That is, the buffer member **500** may be accommodated in the housing unit **110** and the shield can **120** while being disposed on the carrier **310**.

(97) The carrier **310** may then be moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) by the first actuator **300** while being accommodated in the housing **110** and the shield can **120**, and the lens unit **200** may also be moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(98) The buffer member **500** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310** and may have a length in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), such that the carrier **310** comes into contact with the housing **110** or the shield can **120** when the carrier is moved in the housing unit **100** relative to the housing unit **100** in the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction).

(99) The buffer member **500** may have a sufficient length in the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction). In this example, contact time between the housing unit **100** and the carrier **310** (or the lens unit **200**) may be increased when the buffer member **500** collides with the housing unit **100** as the carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction). Accordingly, an impact force (or magnitude of the force) for a certain impact energy may be reduced, thereby reducing the flow noise.

(100) Hereinafter, the buffer member **500**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, is described in more detail.

(101) FIG. **4** is a cut-away perspective view taken along line I-I' of the camera module of FIG. **1**; FIG. **5** is a perspective view of the camera module of FIG. **4** from which the shield can is removed; FIGS. **6A** and **6B** are respective exploded views of regions A and B of FIGS. **4** and **5**; and FIG. **7** is a conceptual diagram showing that the buffer member is deformed while the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

(102) Additionally, the X-axis direction is hereinafter referred to as a first direction and the Y-axis direction is referred to as a second direction among the directions perpendicular to the optical axis direction with reference to the drawings.

(103) In one or more examples, the plurality of buffer members **500** may be provided. The plurality of buffer members **500** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310**.

(104) In an example, the plurality of buffer members **500** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310** in a first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction), and may be disposed on different parts of the side surface of the carrier **310**.

(105) The plurality of buffer members **500** may include a first buffer member **510** and a second buffer member **520**. For example, the plurality of buffer members **500** may include the first buffer member **510** facing the housing unit **100** in a first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

(106) In another example, the plurality of buffer members **500** may include the first buffer member **510** facing the housing unit **100** in the first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction and the second buffer member **520** facing the housing unit **100** in the second direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction and the first direction, as shown in the accompanying drawings.

(107) The first buffer member **510** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310** to protrude in the first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction), and may be disposed to face the housing unit **100** in the first direction. Specifically, the first buffer member **510** may be disposed to face the shield can **120** in the first direction while being accommodated in a first groove portion **111** of the housing **110**.

(108) The housing **110** may include the first groove portion **111**, in which a portion of the first buffer member **510** is accommodated, at a position corresponding to the disposed position of the first buffer member **510**.

(109) The first groove portion **111** may extend in the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction) to accommodate a portion of the first buffer member **510**, and may have a size sufficient to

accommodate the first buffer member **510**. One end of the first buffer member **510** that faces the housing **110** in the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction) may be accommodated in the first groove portion **111**.

(110) One end of the first buffer member **510** may be in contact with a bottom surface of the first groove portion **111**, or a minute gap may exist between one end of the first buffer member **510** and the bottom surface of the first groove portion **111**, while the first buffer member **510** is accommodated in the first groove portion **111**.

(111) In accordance with one or more embodiments, a distance between a first end of the first buffer member **510** and the first groove **111** in the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction) may be less than a distance between the carrier **310** and the housing **110** in the optical axis direction (or Z-axis direction).

(112) Additionally, a second end of the first buffer member **510** may slightly protrude outward from the first groove portion **111** while the first buffer member **510** is accommodated in the first groove portion **111**. Accordingly, a distance between the second end of the first buffer member **510** and the shield can **120** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be less than a distance between the carrier **310** and the shield can **120** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(113) In accordance with one or more embodiments, the distance between the first end or the second end of the first buffer member **510** in a length direction and the housing unit **100** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be less than the distance between the carrier **310** and the housing unit **100** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction). Therefore, the first buffer member **510** may first come into contact with the housing unit **100** when the carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), thereby reducing a noise occurring due to a collision between the carrier **310** (or the lens unit **200**) and the housing unit **100**.

(114) Meanwhile, in the example camera module **1000**, the second buffer member **520**, that operates to supplement the first buffer member **510**, may be selectively positioned on the side surface of the carrier **310**.

(115) The second buffer member **520** may be disposed on one surface of the carrier **310** on which the first magnet **321** is disposed. The first magnet **321** may be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310**, and the second buffer member **520** may thus also be disposed on the side surface of the carrier **310**.

(116) The second buffer member **520** may be disposed to face the housing unit **100** in the second direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) and the first direction. Specifically, the second buffer member **520** may be disposed to face the shield can **120** in the second direction while being accommodated in a second groove portion **112** of the housing **110**.

(117) The housing **110** may include the second groove portion **112**, in which a portion of the second buffer member **520** is accommodated, at a position corresponding to the disposed position of the second buffer member **520**.

(118) The second groove portion **112** may extend in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) to accommodate a portion of the second buffer member **520**, and may have a size sufficient to accommodate the second buffer member **520**. One end of the second buffer member **520** that faces the housing **110** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be accommodated in the second groove portion **112**.

(119) The second buffer member **520** may have a cross section perpendicular to the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) larger than the first buffer member **510**. In other words, the second buffer member **520** may be in contact with the shield can **120** or the housing **110** in a larger area than the first buffer member **510**.

(120) In accordance with one or more embodiments, the camera module **1000** may include the first buffer member **510**, a length of the carrier **310** in the first direction may thus be increased, and thus there is a limit to increasing a size of the first buffer member **510**. However, the second buffer member **520** may be disposed in an empty space of one surface of the carrier **310** on which the first

magnet **321** is disposed, and the area of the second buffer member **520** may thus be positioned relatively freely.

(121) Accordingly, dispersion and reduction of the impact force may be improved when the camera module **1000** includes both the first buffer member **510** and the second buffer member **520**.

(122) One end of the second buffer member **520** may be in contact with a bottom surface of the second groove portion **112**, or a minute gap may exist between one end of the second buffer member **520** and the bottom surface of the second groove portion **112**, while the second buffer member **520** is accommodated in the second groove portion **112**.

(123) In accordance with one or more embodiments, a distance between one end of the second buffer member **520** and the second groove **112** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be less than a distance between the carrier **310** and the housing **110** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(124) Additionally, the second end of the second buffer member **520** may slightly protrude outward from the second groove portion **112** while the second buffer member **520** is accommodated in the second groove portion **112**. Accordingly, a distance between the second end of the second buffer member **520** and the shield can **120** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be less than a distance between the carrier **310** and the shield can **120** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(125) In accordance with one or more embodiments, the distance between the first end or the second end of the second buffer member **520** in the length direction and the housing unit **100** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be less than the distance between the carrier **310** and the housing unit **100** in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction). Therefore, the second buffer member **520** may first come into contact with the housing unit **100** when the carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), thereby reducing the noise occurring due to the collision between the carrier **310** (or the lens unit **200**) and the housing unit **100**.

(126) Additionally, when the second buffer member **520** is provided, the impact force that occurs when the lens unit **200** and the housing unit **100** collide with each other as the carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction) may be dispersed over larger region and area.

(127) In an example, referring to FIG. 6A, the buffer member **500** may include mounting portions **511** and **521** and deformed portions **512** and **522**.

(128) The deformed portion **512** or **522** is a portion that is deformed when contacted with the housing unit **100** when the carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction), and may have a length in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(129) The deformed portion **512** or **522** may be continuously deformed while in contact with the housing unit **100** to absorb an impact, thereby reducing an impact sound. Accordingly, the deformed portion **512** or **522** may be made of a material which may be elastically deformed. In a non-limited example, the deformed portion **512** or **522** may be made of an elastomer material (e.g., a rubber material), as only an example.

(130) The deformed portion **512** or **522** may have a symmetrical structure with respect to a direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction). In other words, the upper and lower portions of the deformed portion **512** or **522** may have a length (considered) the same as each other based on its central portion in the length direction. Accordingly, the deformed portion **512** or **522** may have the same buffering performance in both the directions when the carrier **310** is moved in the optical axis direction (the Z-axis direction).

(131) The buffer member **500** may be coupled to the carrier **310** through the mounting portions **511** and **521**. In other words, the first buffer member **510** and the second buffer member **520** may be mounted on the carrier **310** through the mounting portions **511** and **521** while the deformed portions **512** and **522** are mounted on the mounting portions **511** and **521**.

(132) In an example, the buffer member **500** may be manufactured integrally with the carrier **310** or may be manufactured separately from the carrier **310** and then mounted on the carrier **310**. For

example, the buffer member **500** may be manufactured integrally with the carrier **310** in a double injection (or insert injection) method.

(133) In another example, the buffer member **500** may be manufactured separately by a double injection (or insert injection) method, and then mounted on the carrier **310**. In this example, as shown in the drawings, a groove **311** or **312** having a shape corresponding to a shape of the mounting portion **511** or **521** may be positioned in the side surface of the carrier **310**, and the mounting portion **511** or **521** may be mounted in the groove **311** or **312**.

(134) As shown above, the camera module **1000**, in accordance with one or more embodiments, may reduce the flow noise that occurs when the camera module is moved in the optical axis direction.

(135) As set forth above, in accordance with one or more embodiments, the camera module may reduce the flow noise that occurs when the camera module is moved in the optical axis direction.

(136) While this disclosure includes specific examples, it will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art, after an understanding of the disclosure of this application, that various changes in form and details may be made in these examples without departing from the spirit and scope of the claims and their equivalents. The examples described herein are to be considered in a descriptive sense only, and not for purposes of limitation. Descriptions of features or aspects in each example are to be considered as being applicable to similar features or aspects in other examples. Suitable results may be achieved if the described techniques are performed in a different order, and/or if components in a described system, architecture, device, or circuit are combined in a different manner, and/or replaced or supplemented by other components or their equivalents. Therefore, the scope of the disclosure is defined not by the detailed description, but by the claims and their equivalents, and all variations within the scope of the claims and their equivalents are to be construed as being included in the disclosure.

Claims

1. A camera module, comprising: a housing unit; a carrier, accommodated in the housing unit, and configured to move in an optical axis direction; a lens unit, accommodated in the carrier, and in which one or more lenses are disposed; a first buffer member, disposed on a side surface of the carrier, and configured to protrude in a direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction, and having a length in the optical axis direction; and a second buffer member, disposed on the side surface of the carrier to be spaced apart from the first buffer member, and configured to have a cross section perpendicular to the optical axis direction that is different from a cross section of the first buffer member perpendicular to the optical axis direction, wherein the side surface of the carrier, on which the first buffer member and the second buffer member are disposed, has a length that extends in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.
2. The camera module of claim 1, wherein the housing unit comprises a groove portion that extends in the optical axis direction, and configured to accommodate at least a portion of the first buffer member.
3. The camera module of claim 2, wherein the first buffer member comprises a plurality of first buffer members, and the plurality of first buffer members are disposed on respective side surfaces of the carrier in a first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.
4. The camera module of claim 3, wherein the plurality of first buffer members are configured to face the housing unit in the first direction.
5. The camera module of claim 4, wherein the second buffer member is configured to face the housing unit in a second direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction and the first direction.
6. The camera module of claim 5, wherein the cross section of the second buffer member perpendicular to the optical axis direction is larger than the first buffer member.
7. The camera module of claim 1, wherein a distance between the housing unit and the first buffer

member in the optical axis direction is less than a distance between the carrier and the housing unit in the optical axis direction.

8. The camera module of claim 1, wherein the housing unit comprises: a housing configured to accommodate the carrier; and a shield can that is coupled to the housing while the housing accommodates the carrier, and wherein the first buffer member is configured to come into contact with the housing or the shield can when the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

9. The camera module of claim 1, wherein the first buffer member and the second buffer member each comprises: a mounting portion coupled to the carrier; and a deformed portion, mounted on the mounting portion, and configured to deform when in contact with the housing unit when the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction.

10. The camera module of claim 9, wherein the deformed portion has a symmetrical structure with respect to the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

11. The camera module of claim 1, further comprising one or more of: a first actuator unit configured to move the carrier and the lens unit in the optical axis direction; and a second actuator unit configured to move the lens unit in the direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction.

12. A camera module, comprising: a carrier configured to accommodate a lens unit; a housing configured to accommodate the carrier; a shield can coupled to the housing while the housing accommodates the carrier; a first buffer member disposed on a side surface of the carrier, and configured to protrude in a direction perpendicular to an optical axis direction, and having a length in the optical axis direction; and a second buffer member disposed on the side surface of the carrier to be spaced apart from the first buffer member, wherein the carrier is configured to move relative to the housing and the shield can in the optical axis direction, wherein at least one of the first buffer member and the second buffer member is configured to come into contact with the shield can or the housing when the carrier is moved in the optical axis direction, and wherein a contact area of the first buffer member with the housing or the shield can is different from a contact area of the second buffer member with the housing or the shield.

13. The camera module of claim 12, wherein a distance between the first buffer member and the shield can in the optical axis direction is less than a distance between the carrier and the shield can in the optical axis direction.

14. The camera module of claim 12, wherein the housing comprises a groove portion that extends in the optical axis direction, and wherein the groove portion accommodates at least a portion of the buffer member.

15. The camera module of claim 14, wherein a distance between the first buffer member and the groove portion in the optical axis direction is less than a distance between the carrier and the housing in the optical axis direction.

16. The camera module of claim 12, wherein: the first buffer member is disposed to face the shield can in a first direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction; and wherein the second buffer member is disposed to face the shield can in a second direction perpendicular to the optical axis direction and the first direction.

17. The camera module of claim 1, wherein the second buffer member is disposed on an upper portion of the side of the carrier.

18. The camera module of claim 12, wherein a cross section of the second buffer member perpendicular to the optical axis direction is larger than a cross section of the first buffer member perpendicular to the optical axis direction.
