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(54) **SERVER DEVICE, CONTROL METHOD PERFORMED BY THE SERVER DEVICE, PROGRAM, AND TERMINAL DEVICE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An item can be provided to a user by a lottery and the item odds can be changed in accordance with a prescribed condition. A control method, performed by a server device connected via a communication line to a terminal device operated by a user, can be initiated by selecting a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes. Following the selection of the lottery mode, the system may hold a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode, and, following the holding of the drawing, may ensure that the won item is provided to the user via the terminal device.

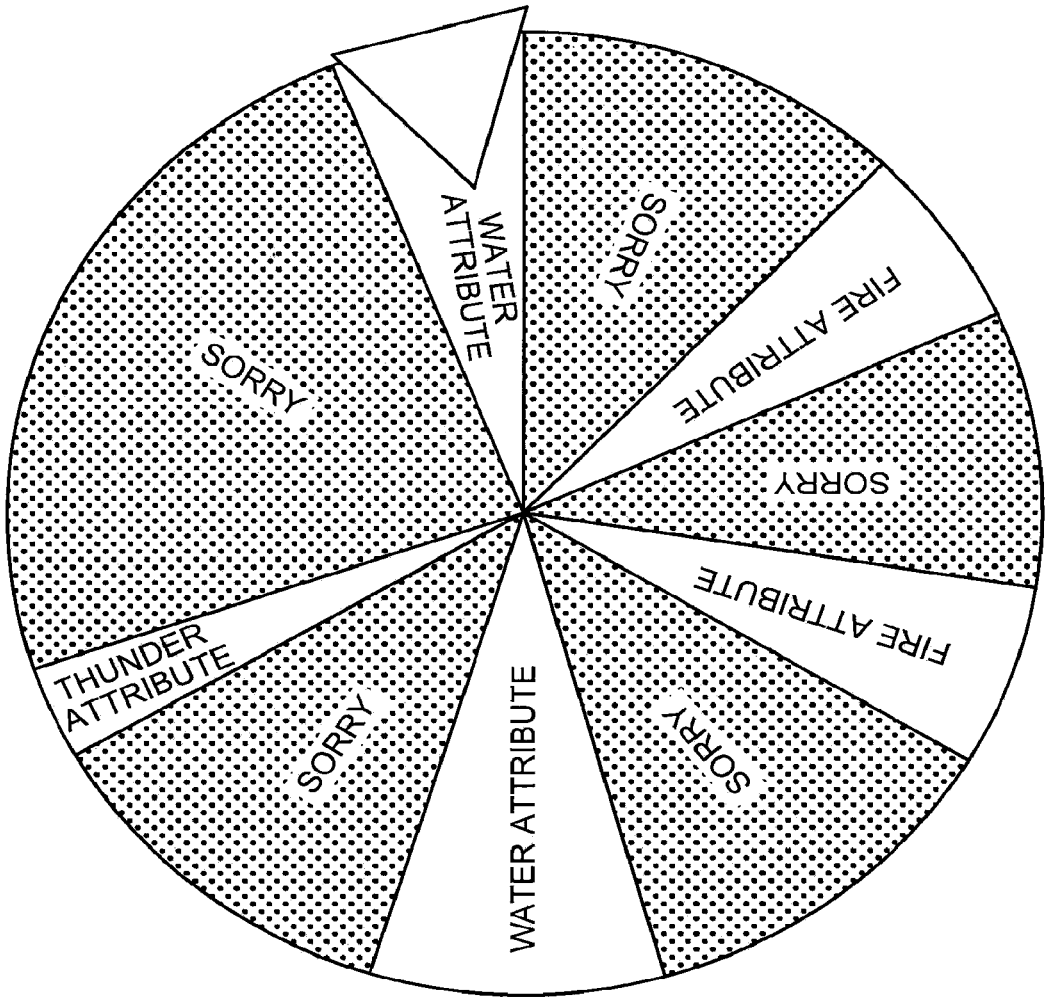


FIG. 1

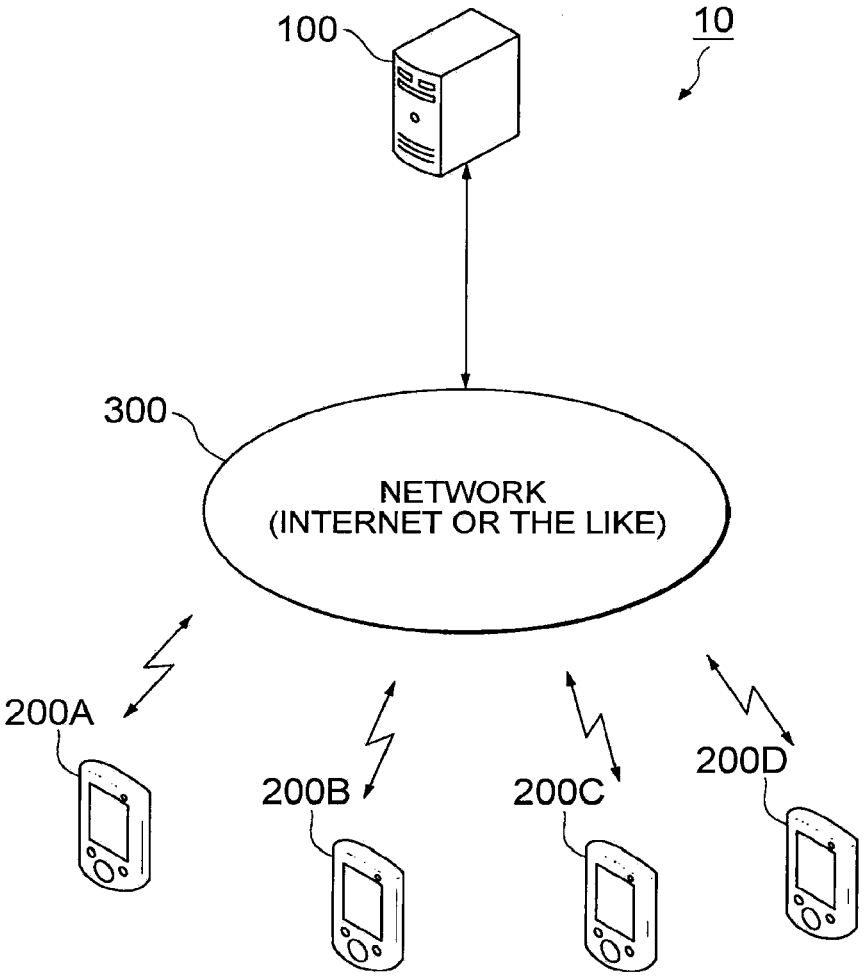


FIG. 2

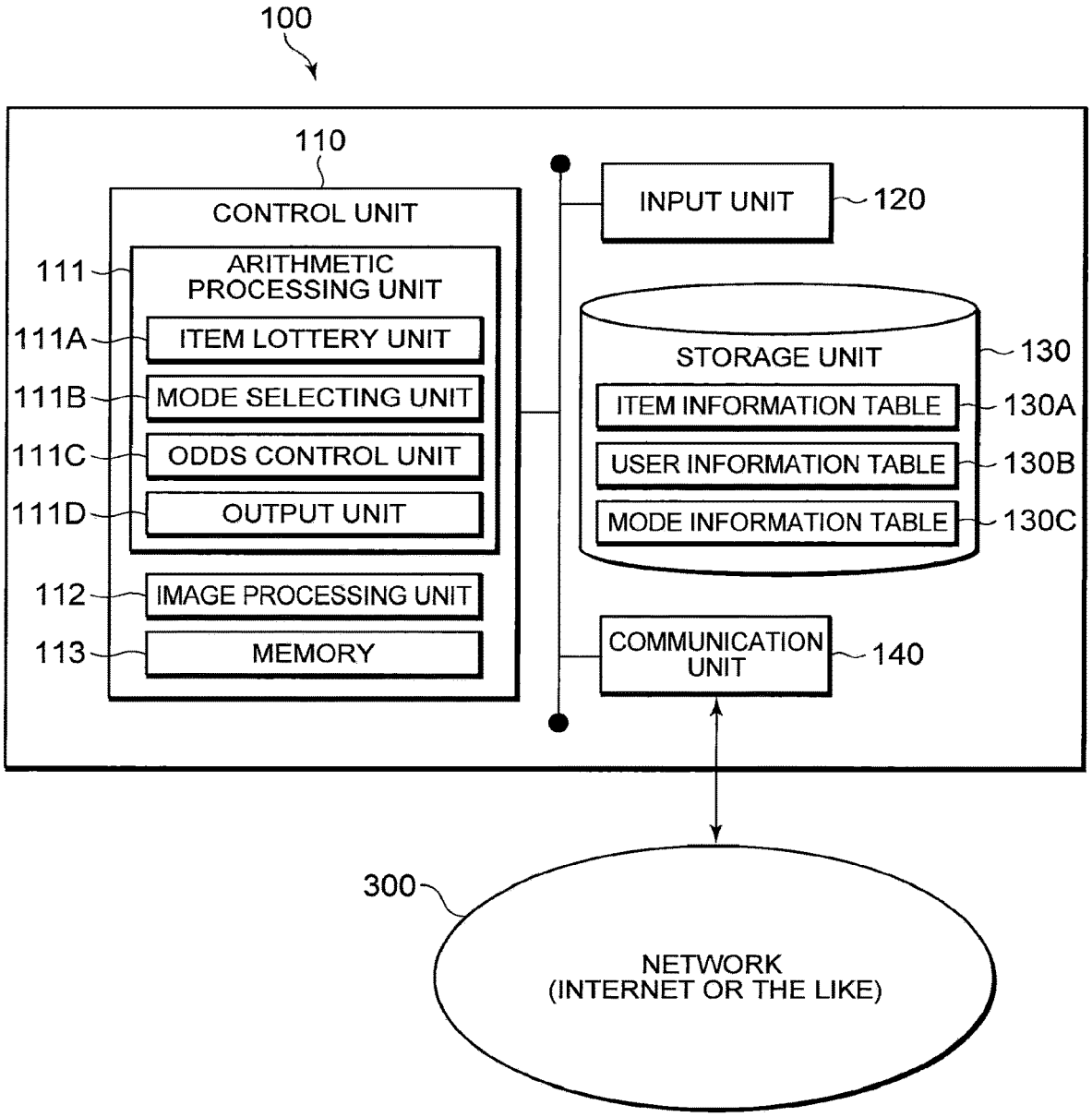

100
110
CONTROL UNIT
111
ARITHMETIC PROCESSING UNIT
111A
ITEM LOTTERY UNIT
111B
MODE SELECTING UNIT
111C
ODDS CONTROL UNIT
111D
OUTPUT UNIT
112
IMAGE PROCESSING UNIT
113
MEMORY
INPUT UNIT
120
STORAGE UNIT
130
ITEM INFORMATION TABLE
130A
USER INFORMATION TABLE
130B
MODE INFORMATION TABLE
130C
COMMUNICATION UNIT
140
300
NETWORK
(INTERNET OR THE LIKE)

FIG. 3

ITEM IDENTIFIER	ITEM NAME	TIMING OF ADDITION	PARAMETERS				
			ATTRIBUTE	HP	ATTACK POWER	DEFENSE POWER	RARITY
ID00001	Xxxxxx	2013/03/22	WATER	300	150	120	SS
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

FIG. 4

USER ID	PASSWORD	HISTORY INFORMATION					MODE SELECTION PROBABILITIES			
		Lv	STATUS	PLAYING TIME	ACQUIRED ITEMS	MODE INFORMATION	MID 001	MID 002	MID 003	...
UID001	Yr98AB77	45	LOGGED IN	156:45:16	ID0003, ID0006	...	50%	30%	15%	...
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

FIG. 5

MODE IDENTIFIER	MODE NAME	ITEM ODDS			
		ID001	ID002	ID003	
MID001	NON-DUPLICATE MODE	20%	40%	30%	···
MID002	WATER ATTRIBUTE GUARANTEE MODE	60%	0%	0%	···
MID003	FIRE ATTRIBUTE GUARANTEE MODE	0%	50%	0%	···
MID004	THUNDER ATTRIBUTE GUARANTEE MODE	0%	0%	70%	···
MID005	XXX OR GREATER ATTACK POWER GUARANTEE MODE	20%	0%	70%	···
MID006	XXX OR GREATER DEFENSE POWER GUARANTEE MODE	0%	50%	50%	···
MID007	SKILL-ATTACHED ITEM GUARANTEE MODE	0%	0%	70%	···
MID008	EVENT ITEM ENRICHED MODE	0%	60%	70%	···
MID009	NEWLY ADDED ITEM ENRICHED MODE	0%	0%	0%	···
MID010	RECOVERY SKILL ITEM ENRICHED MODE	0%	0%	0%	···
MID011	WHOLE ATTACK SKILL ITEM ENRICHED MODE	50%	0%	70%	···
MID012	EVOLVABLE ITEM ENRICHED MODE	0%	0%	0%	···
MID013	EVOLUTION MATERIAL ITEM ENRICHED MODE	0%	0%	70%	···
⋮	⋮				

FIG. 6

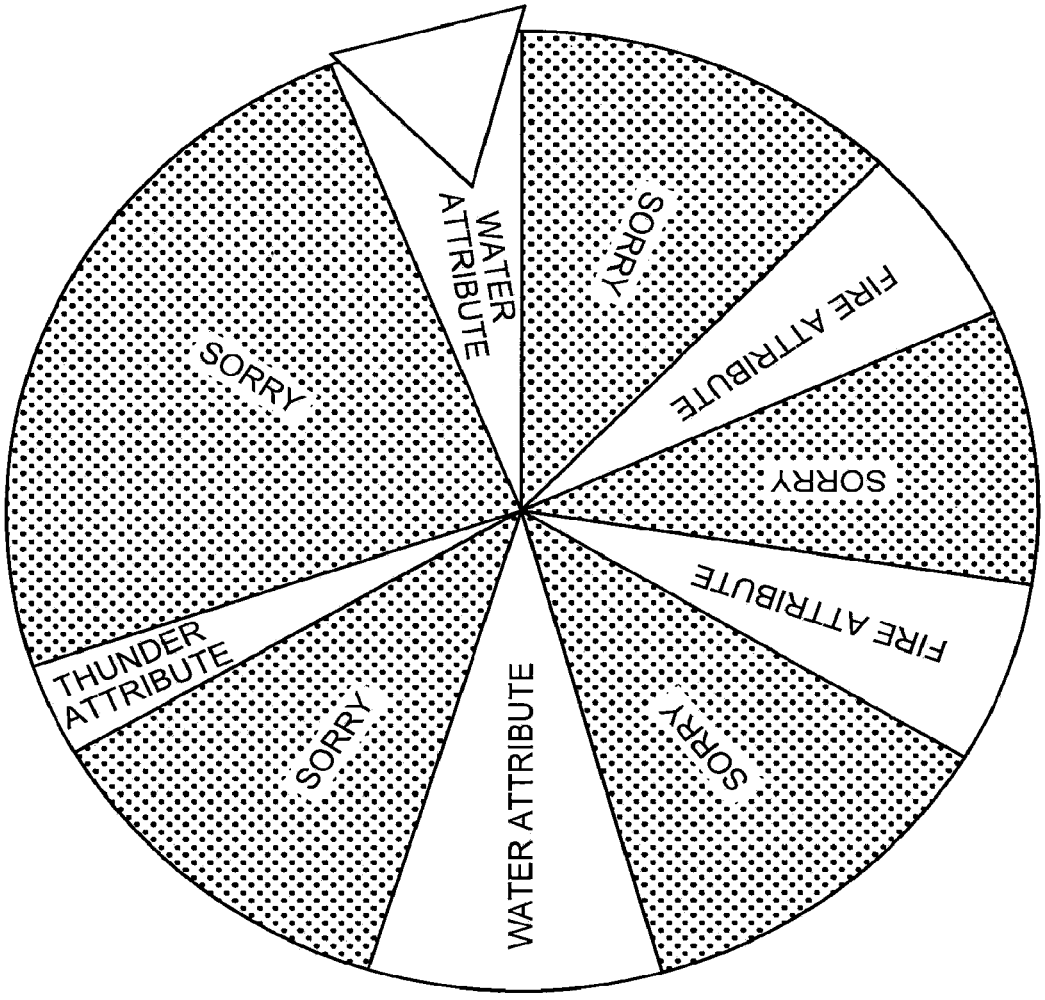

WATER ATTRIBUTE
SORRY
FIRE ATTRIBUTE
SORRY
FIRE ATTRIBUTE
SORRY
WATER ATTRIBUTE
SORRY
THUNDER ATTRIBUTE
SORRY

FIG. 7

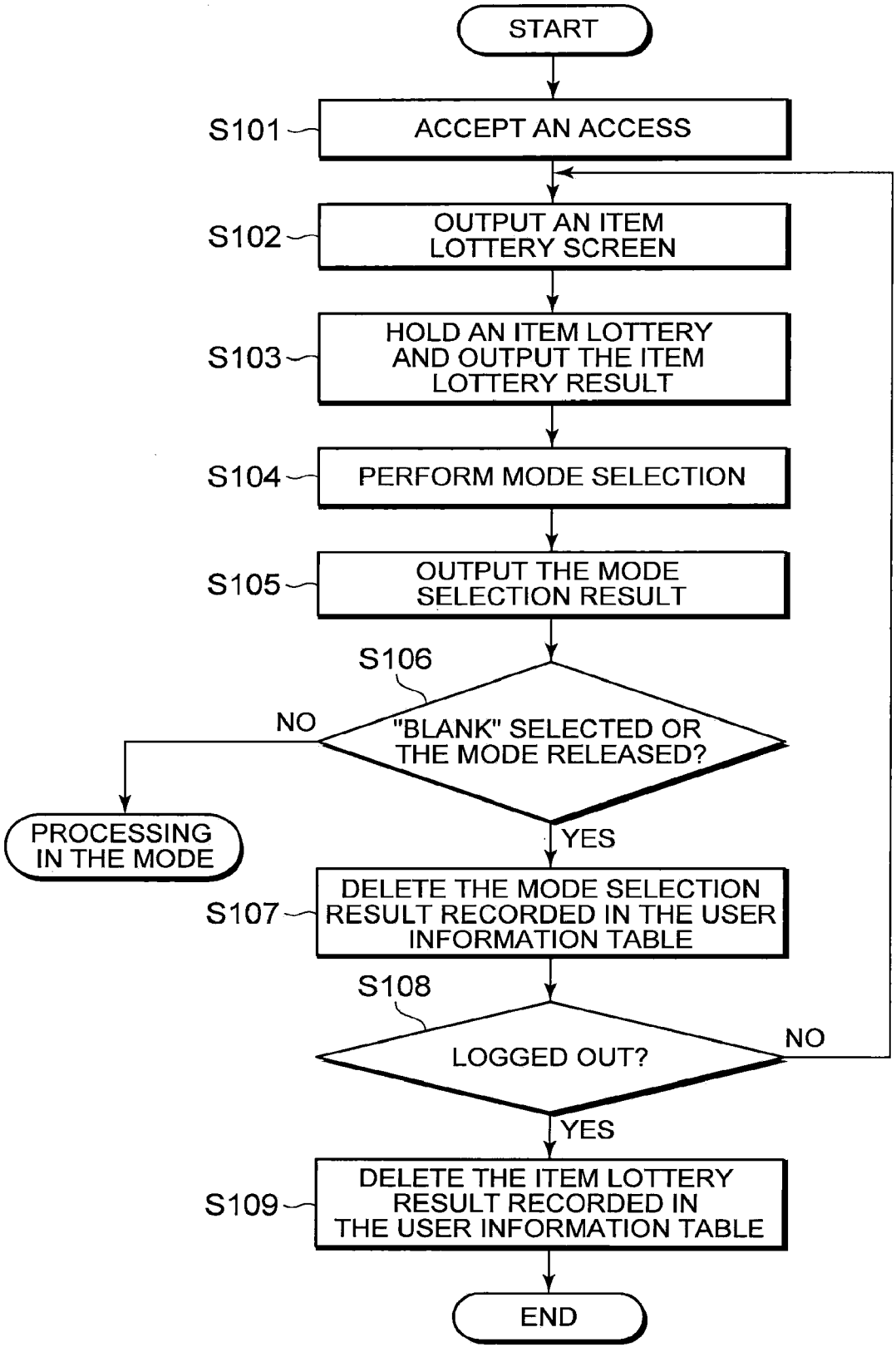

START
S101
ACCEPT AN ACCESS
S102
OUTPUT AN ITEM LOTTERY SCREEN
S103
HOLD AN ITEM LOTTERY AND OUTPUT THE ITEM LOTTERY RESULT
S104
PERFORM MODE SELECTION
S105
OUTPUT THE MODE SELECTION RESULT
S106
"BLANK" SELECTED OR THE MODE RELEASED?
NO
YES
PROCESSING IN THE MODE
S107
DELETE THE MODE SELECTION RESULT RECORDED IN THE USER INFORMATION TABLE
S108
LOGGED OUT?
NO
YES
S109
DELETE THE ITEM LOTTERY RESULT RECORDED IN THE USER INFORMATION TABLE
END

FIG. 8

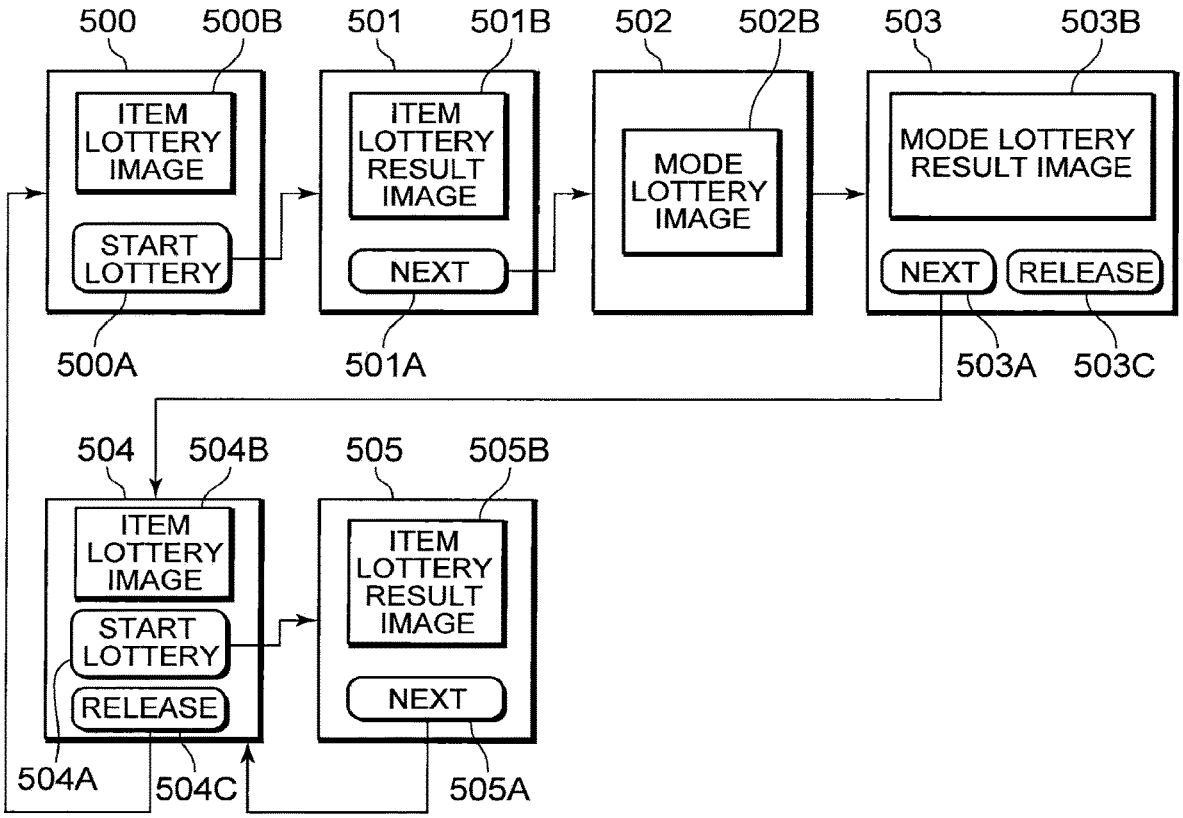

500
500B
ITEM LOTTERY IMAGE
START LOTTERY
500A
501
501B
ITEM LOTTERY RESULT IMAGE
NEXT
501A
502
502B
MODE LOTTERY IMAGE
503
503B
MODE LOTTERY RESULT IMAGE
NEXT
RELEASE
503A
503C
504
504B
ITEM LOTTERY IMAGE
START LOTTERY
RELEASE
504A
504C
505
505B
ITEM LOTTERY RESULT IMAGE
NEXT
505A

FIG. 9

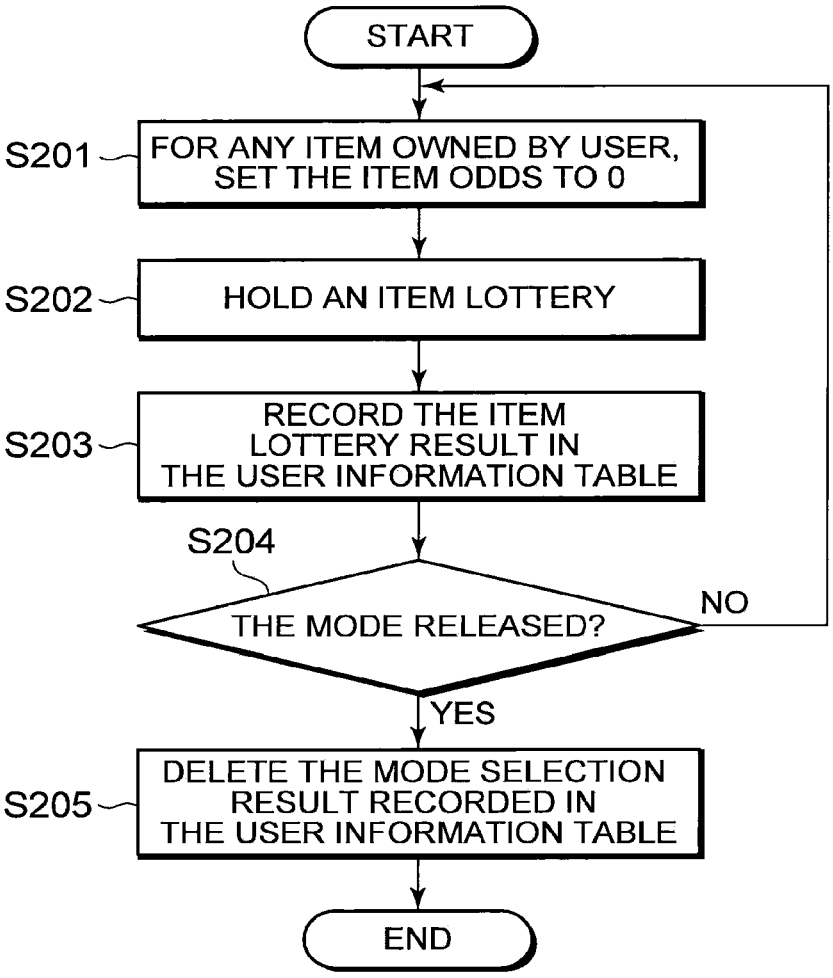
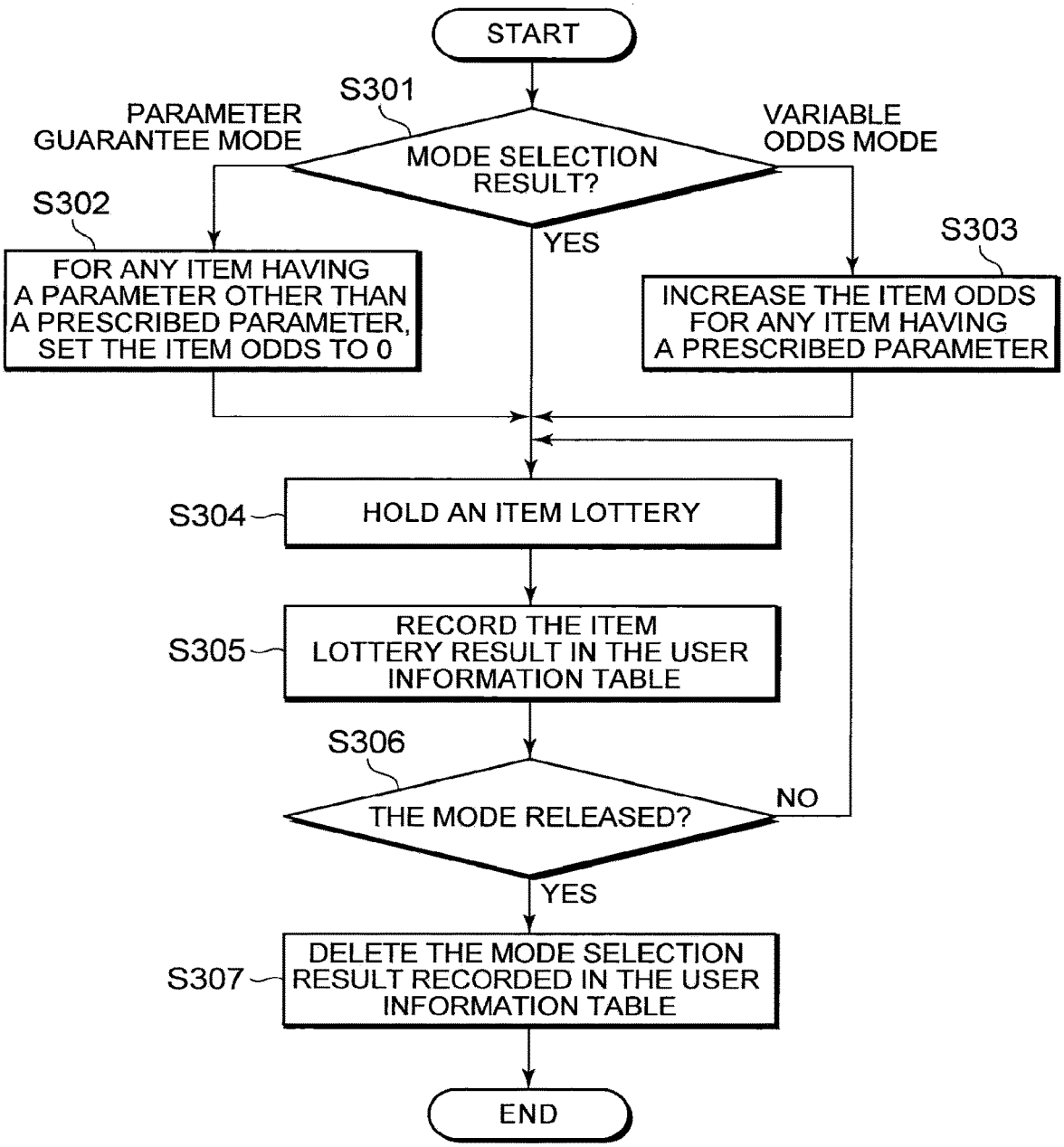

START
S201
FOR ANY ITEM OWNED BY USER, SET THE ITEM ODDS TO 0
S202
HOLD AN ITEM LOTTERY
S203
RECORD THE ITEM LOTTERY RESULT IN THE USER INFORMATION TABLE
S204
THE MODE RELEASED?
NO
YES
S205
DELETE THE MODE SELECTION RESULT RECORDED IN THE USER INFORMATION TABLE
END

FIG. 10


START
S301
MODE SELECTION RESULT?
PARAMETER GUARANTEE MODE
VARIABLE ODDS MODE
S302
FOR ANY ITEM HAVING A PARAMETER OTHER THAN A PRESCRIBED PARAMETER, SET THE ITEM ODDS TO 0
YES
S303
INCREASE THE ITEM ODDS FOR ANY ITEM HAVING A PRESCRIBED PARAMETER
S304
HOLD AN ITEM LOTTERY
S305
RECORD THE ITEM LOTTERY RESULT IN THE USER INFORMATION TABLE
S306
THE MODE RELEASED?
NO
YES
S307
DELETE THE MODE SELECTION RESULT RECORDED IN THE USER INFORMATION TABLE
END

SERVER DEVICE, CONTROL METHOD PERFORMED BY THE SERVER DEVICE, PROGRAM, AND TERMINAL DEVICE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority from U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/387,946, filed on Apr. 18, 2019, entitled "SERVER DEVICE, CONTROL METHOD PERFORMED BY THE SERVER DEVICE, PROGRAM, AND TERMINAL DEVICE," which claims priority from U.S. Pat. No. 10,307,681, filed on Mar. 27, 2014, entitled "SERVER DEVICE, CONTROL METHOD PERFORMED BY THE SERVER DEVICE, PROGRAM, AND TERMINAL DEVICE," which in turn claims priority from Japanese Patent Application No. 2013-070196, filed Mar. 28, 2013, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Disclosed herein are a server device, a control method performed by the server device, a program, and a terminal device.

[0003] Conventionally, there are many techniques related to a server device which provides a game in which a user plays a match-type battle or completes a quest using the items he/she owns. For example, JP2008-220984A discloses a game server which comprises: image data storing means which stores image data for displaying game images, message data storing means which stores message data for displaying messages including rules, and control means which outputs a rule message, before a game starts, in a manner perceivable by a game player, displays on a display device a game image corresponding to the rule message on the basis of the image data and, after the game starts, displays on the display device a game image related to the game on the basis of the image data.

SUMMARY

[0004] With conventional techniques as in the game server of JP2008-220984A, the ways of acquiring battle cards are limited, leading to degradation of the user's interest in the game. As it is particularly difficult to acquire highly rare items, the user may have an impression that there is no chance of acquiring such an item, in which case the user's interest in the game will decrease considerably.

[0005] In view of the foregoing, an object of various embodiments of the present invention is to provide a server device which enables an item to be provided by a lottery and allows the item odds to be changed in accordance with a prescribed condition, and also to provide a control method performed by the server device, a program, and a terminal device.

[0006] A method according to the invention comprises a control method performed by a server device which is connected via a communication line to a terminal device operated by a user. The control method may comprise: the step of selecting a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes; the step of, following the selection of the lottery mode, holding a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode; and the step of, following the holding of the drawing, providing the won item to the terminal device.

[0007] In the above-described lottery mode, the odds of winning a prescribed type of item among the plurality of types of items may be increased.

[0008] The control method may further include the step of storing the item acquired by the user, wherein in the lottery mode, the odds of winning an item that the user has not acquired yet among the plurality of types of items may be increased.

[0009] The above-described step of selecting a lottery mode may include a step of holding a lottery to select a lottery mode from among the plurality of lottery modes.

[0010] The control method may further include the step of storing user information associating the user with at least one of level, game progress, acquired items, and playing time, wherein in the step of holding a lottery to select a lottery mode, the lottery mode selected in the lottery may be varied in accordance with the user information.

[0011] A server device according to the invention comprises a server device which is connected via a communication line to a terminal device operated by a user. The server device may include: a lottery mode selecting unit which selects a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes; a lottery unit which is operable, in response to the selection of the lottery mode, to hold a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode; and a providing unit which is operable, in response to the holding of the drawing, to provide the won item to the terminal device.

[0012] A terminal device according to the invention comprises a terminal device which is operated by a user and connectable to a server device via a communication line. The terminal device includes a processor which may perform the steps of: receiving, from the server device, a lottery mode selected from among a plurality of lottery modes; displaying the received lottery mode on a display; displaying a presentation of holding a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the received lottery mode; and displaying the item won in the drawing on the display.

[0013] A system according to the invention comprises a system which includes a terminal device operated by a user and a server device connected to the terminal device via a communication line. The system may include: a lottery mode selecting unit which selects a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes; a lottery unit which is operable, in response to the selection of the lottery mode, to hold a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode; and a providing unit which is operable, in response to the holding of the drawing, to provide the won item to the terminal device.

[0014] A server device according to the invention comprises a server device which is connected via a communication line to a terminal device operated by a user. The server device may include: means for selecting a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes; means operable, in response to the selection of the lottery mode, for holding a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode; and means operable, in response to the holding of the drawing, for providing the won item to the terminal device.

[0015] A storage medium according to the invention comprises a computer-readable storage medium having recorded therein a process for causing a computer to perform steps which may include: the step of getting connected via a communication line to a terminal device operated by a user;

the step of selecting a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes; the step of, following the selection of the lottery mode, holding a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode; and the step of, following the holding of the drawing, providing the won item to the terminal device.

[0016] The program of the invention may be installed or loaded to a computer by downloading it from a recording medium, such as an optical disk like a CD-ROM, a magnetic disk, or a semiconductor memory, or downloading it through a communication network.

[0017] In the specification, the "unit" does not solely mean a physical structure. It also includes the case where a function of the structure is implemented by software. Further, a function of a structure may be implemented by two or more physical structures, or functions of two or more structures may be implemented by a single physical structure.

[0018] With the control method according to the invention, which is performed by a server device connected via a communication line to a terminal device operated by a user and which includes the step of selecting a lottery mode from among a plurality of lottery modes, the step of following the selection of the lottery mode, holding a drawing from among a plurality of types of items on the basis of the selected lottery mode, and the step of following the holding of the drawing, providing the won item to the terminal device, it becomes possible to provide an item by a lottery and change the item odds in accordance with a prescribed condition.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0019] FIG. **1** is a configuration diagram of a game system including a server device according to a first embodiment;

[0020] FIG. **2** is a block diagram of the server device in the first embodiment;

[0021] FIG. **3** shows an item information table in the first embodiment;

[0022] FIG. **4** shows a user information table in the first embodiment;

[0023] FIG. **5** shows a mode information table in the first embodiment;

[0024] FIG. **6** shows an exemplary mode lottery screen in the first embodiment;

[0025] FIG. **7** is a chart illustrating the process flow of the server device in the first embodiment;

[0026] FIG. **8** illustrates screen transitions in the first embodiment;

[0027] FIG. **9** is a chart illustrating the process flow of odds control processing in the first embodiment; and

[0028] FIG. **10** is another chart illustrating the process flow of the odds control processing in the first embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0029] A first embodiment of the invention will be described below with reference to FIGS. **1** to **10**.

[0030] FIG. **1** is a system configuration diagram of a game system **10** including a server device **100** according to the embodiment. As shown in FIG. **1**, the server device **100** is a server computer connected to a network **300** such as the Internet or a dedicated line. Besides the server device **100**, terminal devices, i.e. mobile terminals **200**A to **200**D (hereinafter, the mobile terminals **200**A to **200**D will be collectively referred to as "mobile terminal(s) **200**"), are connected to the network **300** in a wired or wireless manner. The server device **100** and the mobile terminals **200**, which are made communicable with each other, constitute the game system **10**.

[0031] The game system **10** will be outlined first.

[0032] A user of this game system **10** uses a mobile terminal **200**, connected to the network **300**, to get connected to the server device **100**, to thereby receive a game provided. The user who has been connected to the server device **100** can draw lots to acquire, from the server device **100**, items necessary for the progress of the game.

[0033] The mobile terminal **200** is an information processing device having the function of communicating with the server device **100** via the network **300**. Specifically, the mobile terminal **200** may be a mobile phone, smart phone, notebook PC, PDA, or the like. Although not shown in FIG. **1**, the mobile terminal **200** preferably comprises a main control unit including a CPU and memory, a communication unit for connecting the terminal to the network **300**, an input unit such as a touch panel for accepting user operations, and a display unit which displays an item lottery result. Although the terminal used by a user to access the server device **100** is the mobile terminal **200** in the embodiment, not limited thereto, it may be a desktop PC or other terminal device which is not portable, for example.

[0034] There are a plurality of types of items the user can acquire using the mobile terminal **200**. They may include, for example: skill-improving items, which increase or improve attack power, defense power, or hit points of a player manipulated by the user when the player fights with an enemy character in the game; recovery items, which restore the player's hit points; attack items, which are used to attack an enemy character; and defense items, which are used to defend the player against an attack from an enemy character. As used herein, the "skill" means the ability to do a specific action such as attack, defense, recovery, or special attack.

[0035] It is desirable that the attack and defense items each have, as a parameter, an attribute such as fire, water, or thunder indicating chemistry with an enemy character. For example, it may be configured such that an attack item having the water attribute can be used as an effective attacking tool against the enemy character having the fire attribute. In addition to the attribute, other parameters such as attack power, defense power, hit points, rarity, etc. may be set for each item. For example, the rarity is desirably ranked in accordance with the rarity value of the item. The odds of winning each item in a lottery (hereinafter, referred to as "item odds") vary among patterns (described later) which associate respective items with item odds. The state in which an item lottery is held in a prescribed pattern is called a "mode".

[0036] The configuration of the server device **100** will now be described with reference to FIG. **2**. FIG. **2** is a block diagram of the server device **100**. As shown in FIG. **2**, the server device **100** comprises a control unit **110**, an input unit **120**, a storage unit **130**, and a communication unit **140**.

[0037] The control unit **110** comprises an arithmetic processing unit **111** such as a CPU or MPU, an image processing unit **112**, and a memory **113** such as a RAM. The arithmetic processing unit **111** executes a program recorded in the storage unit **130**, on the basis of inputs, to cause the functional units to operate. The program may be stored in a storage medium such as a CD-ROM, or distributed via the

network **300**, and installed into the computer. The memory **113** temporarily stores a server program, a game program, and various kinds of data necessary for computation during execution of the processing in the programs.

[0038] The image processing unit **112** generates images to be transmitted to the user mobile terminal **200**. The images generated by the image processing unit **112** specifically include an image of an item, an image of an item lottery screen, and an image of a mode lottery screen.

[0039] The input unit **120** comprises a keyboard, mouse, touch panel, and the like. The input unit **120** accepts operations input by an administrator of the server device **100**.

[0040] The storage unit **130** is configured with a storage device such as a hard disk. The storage unit **130** has recorded therein programs necessary for execution of processing in the control unit **110**, and data necessary for execution of the programs. Specifically, it is desirable that the storage unit **130** has an item information table **130**A, a user information table **130**B, and a mode information table **130**C. FIG. **3** shows an item information table **130**A, and FIG. **4** shows a user information table **130**B. For example, the item information table **130**A stores, for each item, an item identifier, an item name, parameters (attribute, hit points, attack power, defense power, rarity, etc.), and an item added timing (the time when the item has become available in the game). The user information table **130**B stores, for each user, user information including a user ID, a password, the user's game history (level, status, playing time, acquired items, mode information indicating a mode selection result), and probabilities that respective modes (described later) are selected (hereinafter, referred to as "mode selection probabilities"). Further, as shown in FIG. **5**, the mode information table **130**C stores mode identifiers and mode names of a plurality of types of modes, and item odds in the respective modes.

[0041] The communication unit **140** connects the server device **100** to the network **300**. For example, the communication unit **140** may include a LAN card, analog modem, or ISDN modem, and an interface for connecting it to the processing unit via a system bus or other transmission path.

[0042] Further, as shown in FIG. **2**, the arithmetic processing unit **111** has, as functional units, an item lottery unit **111**A, a mode selecting unit **111**B, an odds control unit **111**C, and an output unit **111**D.

[0043] The item lottery unit **111**A holds a lottery to determine an item to be provided to a user from among a plurality of types of items. This lottery is desirably displayed in such a manner that the odds of winning an item can be controlled in accordance with the parameters of the item. For example, the lottery may be displayed using a capsule toy or the like in which a lever is rotated on the screen to eject an item, a roulette wheel, a lottery wheel or other lottery device, or a dart board. The image used for a lottery is generated by the image processing unit **112**.

[0044] The mode selecting unit **111**B selects, from among the modes stored in the mode information table **130**C, a mode used for holding an item lottery.

[0045] Examples of the modes include a "non-duplicate mode", "parameter guarantee mode", and "variable odds mode". The "non-duplicate mode" refers to the mode in which any item already owned by the user is excluded from the lots so as to prevent the item from being won.

[0046] The "parameter guarantee mode" refers to the mode in which the probability that the item won in a lottery has a prescribed attribute is guaranteed to be 100%. The probability being 100% will be hereinafter expressed as being "guaranteed". Examples of the parameter guarantee modes include: a "fire attribute guarantee mode", "water attribute guarantee mode", and "thunder attribute guarantee mode" in each of which it is guaranteed that an item having a certain attribute is won; and a "skill-attached item guarantee mode" in which it is guaranteed that an item capable of exerting a specific ability, such as special attack or recovery, is won.

[0047] The "variable odds mode" refers to the mode in which the odds of winning a specific item are increased compared to the odds in a normal mode. Examples of the variable odds modes include: a "newly added item enriched mode" in which the odds of winning an item newly added to the game are increased, and a "skill-attached item enriched mode" in which the odds of winning an item with a prescribed skill are increased.

[0048] The information stored in the mode information table **130**C for the respective modes will now be described. As explained above, each record in the mode information table **130**C stores a mode identifier, a mode name, and item odds for respective items in the mode. For example, in the record for the "non-duplicate mode", values indicating the odds of winning respective items when the user does not have the corresponding items yet are stored as the item odds. These odds of winning items when the user does not have the corresponding items yet may be the same values as those in a normal mode.

[0049] In each of the records for the "parameter guarantee modes", a prescribed value is stored as the item odds for any item having the parameter the winning of which is guaranteed in that mode, and "0" is stored as the item odds for the other items. For example, in the record for the "fire attribute guarantee mode", a prescribed value is stored as the item odds for any item having the fire attribute, and "0" is stored as the item odds for any item having an attribute other than the fire attribute.

[0050] Further, in each of the records for the "variable odds modes", a value higher than that in the normal mode is stored as the item odds for any item having a specific parameter for each mode. For example, it may be configured such that, in the record for the "newly added item enriched mode", a value twice as large as that in the normal mode is stored as the item odds for any item that has been newly added, and the same values as those in the normal mode are stored as the item odds for the other items.

[0051] One of these modes is desirably selected by a lottery. The mode lottery can be held in various manners, as in the case of the item lottery. FIG. **6** shows an exemplary mode lottery screen. In this example, a lot is drawn for a mode in a roulette type lottery, from among "blank (normal mode)", "fire attribute guarantee mode", "water attribute guarantee mode", and "thunder attribute guarantee mode". It should be noted that the number of modes from which one mode is selected by a lottery, and the types and combination of the modes are not limited to those shown in this example.

[0052] It is also desirable that the mode selecting unit **111**B controls the mode selection probabilities on the basis of the user information of respective users stored in the user information table **130**B. For example, it may be configured such that, upon mode selection, the probability that "blank (normal mode)" is selected is lowered as the user level is higher. It may also be configured such that, in accordance

with the progress of the game, for example in a stage where a large number of enemy characters having the fire attribute appear, the probability that the water attribute guarantee mode is selected is increased. Furthermore, the mode selection probability of a prescribed mode may be varied in accordance with the items owned by a user. For example, in the case where the user possesses a prescribed number or more of recovery items, the probability that the attack skill card enriched mode is selected may be increased. As such, the mode selecting unit **111**B desirably controls the mode selection probabilities of the respective modes so as to compensate for the user's weak points. More specifically, it is desirable that the mode selecting unit **111**B changes the mode selection probabilities for a user, which are stored in the user information table **130**B, as appropriate, depending on the information such as the user's playing time, level, and acquired items, and selects a mode on the basis of the mode selection probabilities thus changed.

[0053] The odds control unit **111**C refers to the mode information table **130**C, on the basis of the mode selected by the mode selecting unit **111**B, to control the item odds. More specifically, the odds control unit **111**C may pass the item odds stored in the mode information table **130**C, as arguments, to a subsequent processing stage. For example, in the mode information table **130**C, for each of the above-described parameter guarantee modes, a prescribed value is stored as the item odds for any item having the parameter the winning of which is guaranteed in the selected mode, and "0" is stored as the item odds for any item not having the parameter the winning of which is guaranteed. The odds control unit **111**C may pass the stored item odds, as arguments, to the item lottery unit **111**A in the subsequent stage. Further, in the non-duplicate mode, the odds control unit **111**C checks the items acquired by the user, which are recorded in the user information table **130**B, sets "0" as the item odds for any item already owned by the user, and passes the item odds ("0"), as an argument, to the item lottery unit **111**A. As for any item not yet owned by the user, the odds control unit **111**C passes the value of the item odds stored in the mode information table **130**C, as an argument, to the item lottery unit **111**A. Further, in each of the variable odds modes, the odds control unit **111**C desirably passes the item odds stored in the mode information table **130**C, as arguments, to the item lottery unit **111**A.

[0054] The output unit **111**D outputs an image generated by the image processing unit **112**. The output unit **111**D may output image information to the mobile terminal **200** to cause the image to be displayed on the screen of the mobile terminal **200**. Alternatively, in the case where the server device **100** is directly connected to a display, the output unit **110**D may cause the image to be displayed on the display.

[0055] The process flow in the arithmetic processing unit when a user uses the game system **10** to draw a lot for an item will now be described in detail with reference to FIGS. **7** and **8**. FIG. **7** is a chart illustrating the process flow in the server device **100**, and FIG. **8** shows transitions of screens displayed on the mobile terminal **200** in the course of the process flow. It should be noted that the process steps included in the process flow described below may be performed in a different order or in parallel, or another step may be added between the process steps, as long as no inconsistency arises in the processing content. Further, the step described as one step for convenience sake may be performed in two or more steps. The steps described as a plurality of steps for convenience sake may be understood as one step.

[0056] First, the server device **100** accepts an access from a user using a mobile terminal **200** (S**101**). At this time, a game start request is transmitted from the mobile terminal **200** to the arithmetic processing unit **111**. It is desirable that the server device **100** requests an input of login information such as a user ID and password before starting the game. With this configuration, when the arithmetic processing unit **111** in the server device **100** recognizes the login information, the arithmetic processing unit **111** can obtain the user's history information linked to the user ID, from the user information table **130**B in the storage unit **130**, so that the game can be restarted from the last interruption.

[0057] When the server device **100** receives a game start request from a user, the image processing unit **112** generates an item lottery screen (screen **500** in FIG. **8**). The output unit **111**D outputs this screen to the mobile terminal **200** of the user (S**102**). On the item lottery screen **500**, as shown in FIG. **8**, a lottery start button **500**A for starting an item lottery and a lottery image **500**B displaying a roulette or other lottery device are displayed.

[0058] When the user selects the lottery start button **500**A by clicking on or touching the button on the item lottery screen **500**, an item lottery is started. The result of the item lottery is displayed on an item lottery result display screen (screen **501** in FIG. **8**) (S**103**). It is desirable that, while the user is logged in, each time a lottery is held, the arithmetic processing unit **111** adds the item lottery result, as an acquired item, to the user information table **130**B.

[0059] On the item lottery result display screen **501**, as shown in FIG. **8**, an image **501**B of the item acquired by the user by the lottery and a "Next" button **501**A for selecting a mode by a lottery are displayed. When the user uses this screen to operate the mobile terminal **200** to select the "Next" button **501**A, mode selection by a lottery is started (S**104**). The mode selection is performed on a mode lottery screen **502** in FIG. **8**. The result of the mode selection is recorded, as a mode selection result (called "mode information"), in the user information table **130**B by the arithmetic processing unit **111**. The mode information is kept while the mode is continued.

[0060] The result of the mode selection is displayed on a mode result display screen **503** in FIG. **8** (S**105**). On this screen, a mode lottery result image **503**B showing the selected mode, a "Next" button **503**A for proceeding to a next item lottery, and a release button **503**C for releasing the mode are displayed. When the user has selected the release button **503**C, or when the result of the mode selection was "blank (normal mode)", the arithmetic processing unit **111** determines that the mode has been released (YES in S**106**), and the mode returns to the normal mode. At this time, the mode information that has been kept in the user information table **130**B is deleted (S**107**), and the screen returns to the item lottery screen **500**.

[0061] On the other hand, when the mode selection result was not "blank" and the user has selected the "Next" button **503**A (NO in S**106**), an item lottery screen **504** shown in FIG. **8** is displayed in accordance with the selected mode, while the state where the item odds are controlled by odds control processing (described later) is being maintained. On the item lottery screen **504**, a lottery start button **504**A for instructing to hold a lottery in accordance with the selected

mode, a lottery image **504**B displaying a roulette or other lottery device, and a release button **504**C for releasing the selected mode are displayed. When the user selects the lottery start button **504**A, an item lottery corresponding to the mode is held. The result of the lottery held in the state where the mode is being maintained is displayed on an item lottery result screen **505** in FIG. **8**. When the user selects a "Next" button **505**A displayed on this screen, the item lottery screen **504** is displayed again, and a lottery is held with the selected mode maintained.

[0062] On the other hand, when the user has selected the release button **504**C on the item lottery screen **504**, the arithmetic processing unit **111** determines that the mode has been released (YES in S**106**), and the mode returns to the normal mode. At this time, the mode information that has been kept in the user information table **130**B is deleted, and the screen returns to the item lottery screen **500**. Further, when the arithmetic processing unit **111** determines that the user has logged out (YES in S**108**), the arithmetic processing unit **111** deletes the information about the acquired items (in other words, history information of the item lottery results) recorded in the user information table **130**B (S**109**), and terminates the process.

[0063] Odds control processing carried out when a lottery is held in the state where a specific mode has been selected will now be described with reference to FIGS. **9** and **10**.

[0064] FIG. **9** is a flowchart illustrating the process flow in the "non-duplicate mode". When the non-duplicate mode has been selected in a lottery, the odds control unit **111**C refers to the acquired items listed in the user information table **130**B to check the items the user has acquired during the logged-in period. The odds control unit **111**C then sets the item odds for any item already owned by the user to "0" (S**201**), and passes the odds ("0"), as an argument, to the item lottery unit **111**A. As for the items not owned by the user, the odds control unit **111**C passes the item odds stored in the mode information table **130**C as they are, as arguments, to the item lottery unit **111**A. Next, the item lottery unit **111**A holds a lottery on the basis of the item odds received from the odds control unit **111**C (S**202**). The arithmetic processing unit **111** adds the item acquired by the user in the item lottery, as an acquired item, to the user information table **130**B as appropriate (S**203**). The processing in S**201** through S**203** is repeated until the user releases the mode. When the arithmetic processing unit **111** determines that the mode has been released (YES in S**204**), the arithmetic processing unit **111** deletes the mode information recorded in the user information table **130**B (S**205**), and terminates the non-duplicate mode.

[0065] FIG. **10** is a flowchart illustrating the process flow in the "parameter guarantee mode" and "variable odds mode". First, the odds control unit **111**C refers to the user information table **130**B to determine the selected mode (S**301**). If the odds control unit **111**C determines that the current mode is the "parameter guarantee mode", the odds control unit **111**C refers to the mode information table **130**C and passes the item odds for each item, as an argument, to the item lottery unit **111**A (S**302**). In the mode information table **130**C, "0" is stored as the item odds for any item that does not have the parameter the winning of which is guaranteed, and a prescribed value is stored as the item odds for any item that has the parameter the winning of which is guaranteed. For example, in the case where the current mode is the water attribute guarantee mode, "0" is passed to the item lottery unit **111**A as the item odds for any item having an attribute other than the water attribute.

[0066] If the odds control unit **111**C determines that the selected mode is the "variable odds mode", the odds control unit **111**C increases the item odds for any item with a prescribed parameter, to a prescribed value (S**303**). For example, in the case where the selected mode is the "newly added item enriched mode", the odds control unit **111**C increases the item odds for any item that has been newly added to the game.

[0067] Each time the item lottery unit **111**A holds a lottery on the basis of the received arguments (item odds) (S**304**), the arithmetic processing unit **111** adds the lottery result to the user information table **130**B (S**305**). The processing in S**304** and S**305** is repeated until the user releases the mode. When the arithmetic processing unit **111** determines that the mode has been released (YES in S**306**), the odds control unit **111**C resets any changed item odds to a normal value. The arithmetic processing unit **111** deletes the mode information recorded in the user information table **130**B (S**307**), and terminates the mode.

Other Embodiments

[0068] While an embodiment of the invention has been described above, the invention is not limited to the above embodiment; various modifications and changes are possible on the basis of the technical ideas of the invention.

[0069] For example, in the above embodiment, the mobile terminal **200** is configured to directly access the server device **100** via the network **300**. Alternatively, for example in the case where the communication system has a Web server, it may be configured such that the Web server relays the communications between the server device **100** and the mobile terminal **200**. This can reduce the security risks.

[0070] Further, in the above embodiment, the mode selecting unit **111**B is configured to determine a mode by a lottery. However, not limited thereto, the mode may be determined in accordance with the progress of the game of a user, for example, or it may be configured to allow a user to select a mode arbitrarily. Although it has been described above that the mode selecting unit **111**B selects a mode used for an item lottery from among the modes stored in the storage unit **130**, the modes do not necessarily have to be stored. For example, branch conditions for the processing carried out by the odds control unit **111**C for controlling the odds may be utilized.

DESCRIPTION OF REFERENCE NUMERALS

[0071] **10**: game system
[0072] **100**: server device
[0073] **110**: control unit
[0074] **111**: arithmetic processing unit
[0075] **111**A: item lottery unit
[0076] **111**B: mode selecting unit
[0077] **111**C: odds control unit
[0078] **111**D: output unit
[0079] **112**: image processing unit
[0080] **113**: memory
[0081] **120**: input unit
[0082] **130**: storage unit
[0083] **130**A: item information table
[0084] **130**B: user information table
[0085] **130**C: mode information table
[0086] **140**: communication unit

[0087] **200**A to **200**D: mobile terminal
[0088] **300**: network
[0089] **500** to **505**: screen
[0090] **500**A to **505**A: button
[0091] **503**C, **504**C: button
[0092] **500**B to **505**B: image

What is claimed is:

1. A control method performed by a server device, the server device connected via a network to a plurality of terminal devices each configured to communicate with the server device and configured to implement a lottery system for enhancing interest of a user in a game, said user associated with a terminal device in the plurality of terminal devices, the method comprising:

storing, in a user information table of a storage unit, a plurality of items acquired by the user in the game;

receiving a start request for the game from the terminal device associated with the user, and, based on the start request, initiating a non-duplicate lottery process comprising:

after receiving the start request, comparing, with an odds control unit of the server device, the user information table and a mode information table associated with the non-duplicate lottery process;

determining one or more matches between the user information table and the mode information table, and generating and providing to the item lottery unit updated mode information table data, wherein an item odds for each of the one or more matches is set to zero in the updated mode information table data; and

executing the non-duplicate lottery process based on the updated mode information table data.

2. The control method according to claim **1**, wherein a step of determining one or more matches between the user information table and the mode information table comprises determining which items are already owned by the user.

3. The control method according to claim **1**, wherein the updated mode information table data comprises item odds for a plurality of items other than the one or more matches, wherein the item odds for each of the plurality of items is greater than zero.

4. The control method according to claim **3**, wherein a step of generating and providing updated mode information table data comprises passing, from the odds control unit to the item lottery unit, as arguments, stored item odds for the plurality of items and for each of the one or more matches.

5. The control method according to claim **3**, wherein the item odds for the plurality of items are default values associated with a normal lottery mode as well as the non-duplicate lottery process.

6. The control method according to claim **1**, further comprising storing a mode selection result in the user information table.

7. The control method according to claim **6**, further comprising determining, after a step of executing the non-duplicate lottery process based on the updated mode information table data, whether a current mode has been released;

when the current mode has not been released, maintaining the mode selection result in the user information table; and

when the current mode has been released, deleting the mode selection result stored in the user information table.

8. The control method according to claim **6**, wherein the method comprises, after a step of receiving the start request, receiving a mode selection request, and selecting, with a mode selecting unit, the mode selection result.

9. The control method according to claim **1**, wherein the method comprises, prior to a step of executing the non-duplicate lottery process, receiving a mode selection request from the terminal device, the mode selection request comprising one of a release command or a continue command;

when the continue command is received, retaining a mode selection result; and

when the release command is received, deleting the mode selection result.

10. The control method according to claim **1**, further comprising:

monitoring a login state of the user; and

upon a determination that the user has logged out, deleting the mode selection result.

11. A server that is communicatively linked to a terminal device via a network and configured to implement a lottery system for enhancing interest of a user in a game, wherein the server carries out steps comprising:

storing, in a user information table of a storage unit of the server, a plurality of items acquired by the user in the game;

receiving a start request for the game from the terminal device, and, based on the start request, initiating a non-duplicate lottery process comprising:

after receiving the start request, comparing, with an odds control unit of the server, the user information table and a mode information table associated with the non-duplicate lottery process;

determining one or more matches between the user information table and the mode information table, and generating and providing to the item lottery unit updated mode information table data, wherein an item odds for each of the one or more matches is set to zero in the updated mode information table data; and

executing the non-duplicate lottery process based on the updated mode information table data.

12. The server according to claim **11**, wherein a step of determining one or more matches between the user information table and the mode information table comprises determining which items are already owned by the user.

13. The server according to claim **11**, wherein the updated mode information table data comprises item odds for a plurality of items other than the one or more matches, wherein the item odds for each of the plurality of items is greater than zero.

14. The server according to claim **13**, wherein a step of generating and providing updated mode information table data comprises passing, from the odds control unit to the item lottery unit, as arguments, stored item odds for the plurality of items and for each of the one or more matches.

15. The server according to claim **13**, wherein the item odds for the plurality of items are default values associated with a normal lottery mode as well as the non-duplicate lottery process.

16. The server according to claim **11**, wherein the server is further configured to perform storing a mode selection result in the user information table.

17. The server according to claim **16**, wherein the server is further configured to perform determining, after a step of

executing the non-duplicate lottery process based on the updated mode information table data, whether a current mode has been released;

when the current mode has not been released, maintaining the mode selection result in the user information table; and

when the current mode has been released, deleting the mode selection result stored in the user information table.

18. The server according to claim **11**, wherein the server is further configured to perform, prior to a step of executing the non-duplicate lottery process, receiving a mode selection request from the terminal device, the mode selection request comprising one of a release command or a continue command;

when the continue command is received, retaining a mode selection result; and

when the release command is received, deleting the mode selection result.

19. The server according to claim **11**, wherein the server is further configured to perform:

monitoring a login state of the user; and

upon a determination that the user has logged out, deleting the mode selection result.

20. A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium having recorded therein a process for causing a computer to perform steps comprising implementing a lottery system for enhancing interest of a user in a game, the steps comprising:

storing, in a user information table of a storage unit of the computer, a plurality of items acquired by the user in the game;

receiving a start request for the game from a user interface of the user, and, based on the start request, initiating a non-duplicate lottery process comprising:

after receiving the start request, comparing, with an odds control unit of the computer, the user information table and a mode information table associated with the non-duplicate lottery process;

determining one or more matches between the user information table and the mode information table, and generating and providing to the item lottery unit updated mode information table data, wherein an item odds for each of the one or more matches is set to zero in the updated mode information table data; and

executing the non-duplicate lottery process based on the updated mode information table data.

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