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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DETERMINING THE TRANSMISSION DATA RATE IN A MULTI-USER COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

VERFAHREN UND GERÄT ZUR BESTIMMUNG DER DATENÜBERTRAGUNGSRATE IN MEHRBENUTZER KOMMUNIKATIONSANORDNUNGEN

PROCEDE ET APPAREIL DE DETERMINATION DU DEBIT DE DONNEES TRANSMISES DANS UN SYSTEME DE COMMUNICATIONS A PLUSIEURS UTILISATEURS

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Description**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****I. Field of the Invention**

[0001] The present invention relates to communications systems. More particularly, the present invention relates to a novel and improved method and apparatus for maximizing total average service quality to users in a multi-user communication system by controlling the data transmission rates to and from users of the multi-user communication system.

II. Description of the Related Art

[0002] The term "multiple access" refers to the sharing of a fixed communications resource by a plurality of users. A typical example of such a fixed communications resource is bandwidth. There are three basic ways to increase the throughput or data rate of an individual user accessing a communications resource. The first way is to increase the transmitters radiated power or alternatively to reduce system losses so that the received signal to noise ratio (SNR) is increased. The second way is to increase the allocation of bandwidth to the user. The third approach is to make allocation of the communications resource more efficient.

[0003] Some of the more common methods of providing multiple access to a communications resource involve both analog and digital communication modulation schemes. Such schemes include frequency division, time division and spread spectrum techniques. In frequency division multiple access (FDMA) techniques, each user is allocated one or more specific sub-bands of frequency. In time division multiple access (TDMA) techniques, periodically recurring time slots are identified, and for each segment of time each user is allocated one or more time slots. In some TDMA systems, users are provided a fixed assignment in time, and in other systems users may access the resource at random times. In spread spectrum communications, users share a common frequency band. Using frequency hopping (FH) modulation, the signal is modulated upon a carrier which changes in frequency according to a predetermined plan. In direct sequence (DS) modulation, the user signal is modulated with a pseudorandom code. In one type of code division multiple access (CDMA) technique which uses direct sequence spread spectrum modulation, a set of orthogonal or nearly orthogonal spread spectrum codes (each using full channel bandwidth) are identified, and each user is allocated one or more specified codes.

[0004] In all multiple access schemes, a plurality of users shares a communications resource without creating unmanageable interference to each other in the detection process. The allowable limit of such interference is defined to be the maximum amount of interference such that the resulting transmission quality is still above a predetermined acceptable level. In digital transmission schemes, the quality is often measured by the bit error rate (BER) or frame error rate (FER). In digital speech communications systems, the overall speech quality is limited by data rate allowed for each user, and by the BER or FER.

[0005] Systems have been developed to minimize the data rate required for a speech signal while still providing an acceptable level of speech quality. If speech is transmitted by simply sampling and digitizing the analog speech signal, a data rate on the order of 64 kilobits per second (Kbps) is required to achieve a speech quality equivalent to that of a conventional analog telephone. However, through the use of speech analysis, followed by the appropriate coding, transmission, and resynthesis at the receiver, a significant reduction in the data rate can be achieved with a minimal decrease in quality.

[0006] Devices which employ techniques to compress speech by extracting parameters that relate to a model of human speech generation are typically called vocoders. Such devices are composed of an encoder, which analyzes the incoming speech to extract the relevant parameters, and a decoder, which resynthesizes the speech using the parameters which are received from the encoder over the transmission channel. As the speech changes, new model parameters are determined and transmitted over the communications channel. The speech is typically segmented into blocks of time, or analysis frames, during which the parameters are calculated. The parameters are then updated for each new frame.

[0007] A more preferred technique to accomplish data compression, so as to result in a reduction of information that needs to be sent, is to perform variable rate vocoding. An example of variable rate vocoding is detailed in U.S. Patent No. 5,414,796 entitled "Variable Rate Vocoder," assigned to the assignee of the present invention. Since speech inherently contains periods of silence, i.e. pauses, the amount of data required to represent these periods can be reduced. Variable rate vocoding most effectively exploits this fact by can be reduced. Variable rate vocoding most effectively exploits this fact by reducing the data rate for these periods of silence. A reduction in the data rate, as opposed to a complete halt in data transmission, for periods of silence overcomes the problems associated with voice activity gating while facilitating a reduction in transmitted information, thus reducing the overall interference in a multiple access

communication system.

[0008] Attention is further drawn to EP-A 0538 546 which discloses a communication apparatus for communication in a time division multiplex communication system (TDMA). That system comprises a plurality of remote users communicating to a communication center. The communication between the remote users and the communication center is based on a TDMA link comprising a number of time slots. Each time slot has an overhead portion for signaling and containing a rate control signal.

[0009] Further, US-A-5103459 relates to a CDMA communication system and US-A-470 1943 relates to a paging system providing an LPDC encoded speech output having an adaptive bit rate.

[0010] It is the objective of the present invention to modify the variability of the transmission rate of variable rate vocoders, and any other variable rate data source, in order to maximize utilization of the communications resource.

[0011] In accordance with the present invention the following is provided: a subsystem for optimizing communications quality, as set forth in claims 1 and 18, a variable rate transceiver for a communication system, as set forth in claim 7, an apparatus of controlling the data rate of message communications in a communication system, as set forth in claims 12, a method for optimizing usage of a multiple access communications resource, as set forth in claim 15, an apparatus for controlling the user capacity of a spread spectrum base station, as set forth in claim 28, a base station in a spread spectrum communication system, as set forth in claim 31, and a method for optimizing usage of a multiple access spread spectrum communications resource, as set forth in claim 33.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0012] The present invention is a novel and improved method and apparatus for maximizing total average service quality to users in a multi-user communication system by controlling the data transmission rates to and from users of the multi-user communication system.

[0013] In the present invention, usage of the available communication resource is monitored. When the usage of the available communication resource becomes too great for a given communications link, and thus the quality falls below a predetermined limit, the data rate to or from the users is limited to free up a portion of the available communication resource. When the usage of the communications resource becomes small, the data rate to or from the users is allowed to increase above the previous limit.

[0014] For example, if the communications link from remote users to a main communications center, hereafter known as the reverse link, becomes overloaded, the main communications center transmits a signaling message requesting that the users, or selected ones of the users, decrease their average transmission data rate. At the remote user end, the signaling message is received and the transmission rate for the remote user is lowered in accordance with the signaling message.

[0015] The remote user, in the example, may be transmitting speech data or other digital data. If the user is transmitting speech data, then his transmission data rate may be adjusted using a variable rate vocoder as is described in above mentioned U.S. Patent No. 5,414,796. The present invention is equally applicable to any variable rate vocoding strategy when the remote user is transmitting speech data. If the user is transmitting digital data that is not speech data, the system can optionally instruct the remote user to modify the transmitted data rate for the specific digital data source.

[0016] On the communication link between the main communication center and the remote users, hereafter known as the forward link, the main communication center monitors the fraction of its total resource capacity that is being used for communicating to the remote users. If the fraction of the communications resource being used is too large, the main communication center will decrease the permitted average transmission data rate to each user or a subset of users. If the fraction of the communications resource being used is too small, the main communication center will permit the average data rate for each user to increase. As in the reverse link, the control of the data rate may be selective in nature based upon the nature of the data (speech or non-speech) being transmitted to the remote users.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] The features, objects, and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the detailed description set forth below when taken in conjunction with the drawings in which like reference characters are identified correspondingly throughout and wherein:

Figure 1 is a block diagram illustrating multiple remote (mobile) users accessing a main communications center (cell base station);

Figure 2 is a block diagram illustrating the effects of a multi-cell (multiple main communications centers) environment on data reception at a remote (mobile) user;

Figure 3 is a graph of average service quality versus number of users at a particular average transmission data rate;

Figure 4 is a graph of average service quality versus number of users for three different average transmission data rates;

Figure 5 is a flowchart of the system monitor and control operation;

Figure 6 is a communication resource pie chart for forward link communications;

Figure 7 is a communication resource pie chart for reverse link communications;

Figure 8 is a communication resource pie chart illustrating the actions to be taken with respect to different fractions of resource usage;

Figure 9 is a communication resource pie chart illustrating conditions under which the data rate would be decreased by the control mechanism of the present invention

Figure 9 is a communication resource pie chart illustrating conditions under which the data rate would be decreased by the control mechanism of the present invention

Figure 10 is a communication resource pie chart illustrating the effects of decreasing the data rate of the previous communications resource;

Figure 11 is a block diagram of the monitor and control system for controlling reverse link communications located at the main communications center;

Figure 12 is a block diagram of the monitor and control system for controlling reverse link communications located at the remote user; and

Figure 13 is a block diagram of the forward link monitor and control apparatus.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0018] Figure 1 illustrates the multi-user communications system communications between remote users 4 and the main transmission center 2. In the exemplary embodiment, these communications are conducted by means of a code division multiple access (CDMA) multi-user scheme, which is detailed in U.S. Patent Serial No. 4,901,307 entitled "Spread Spectrum Multiple Access Communication System Using Satellite or Terrestrial Repeaters (CDMA)," and U.S. Patent Serial No. 5,103,459 entitled "System and Method for Generating Signal Waveform in a CDMA Cellular Telephone System (CDMA)," both assigned to the assignee of the present invention. The communications that occur from the remote users to the main transmission center are referred to as reverse link communications. The communications link that enables communications from remote users 4 to a cell base station 2 is referred to as the reverse link. In a CDMA system, system user capacity is a function of the level of interference in the system.

[0019] Figure 2 illustrates the two main issues that result in the need for the control of the data rate to reduce interference and increase capacity. In the exemplary embodiment of a CDMA multi-cell cellular communications network, the main capacity limit on forward link communications is the interference from neighboring cells as illustrated by the propagation lines drawn from the cell base stations 12 and the single remote user or mobile station 10. The second effect on forward link capacity in the present embodiment is illustrated by the second propagation path 18 from a single cell base station to a mobile station 10. The cause of this effect, known as multipath, is reflection off of obstruction, 16 which may take the form of a building, a mountain, or any other object that is capable of reflecting electromagnetic waves.

[0020] In the exemplary embodiment, interference is received by remote user 10 from cell base stations 12 which are not communicating with the remote user, and interference is received by multipath signals from obstruction 16. In the exemplary embodiment, the operation of a group of cells is overseen by the system controller 14 that provides the data to and from a public telephone switching network (not shown). These communications are referred to as forward link communications.

[0021] In systems like time division multiple access (TDMA) and frequency division multiple access (FDMA), a "hard" capacity limit exists due to the finite number of time slot or frequency sub-band divisions, respectively. When all of the time slots or subbands are allocated to users, the "hard" capacity limit is reached and service to any additional user is impossible. Though the users that have accessed the system before the capacity limit remain unaffected by any excluded users, the average quality of service to all users drops beyond the capacity limit since the quality of service for each additional user denied service is zero.

[0022] In multiple access schemes such as code division multiple access (CDMA) and random access systems like ALOHA and slotted ALOHA systems, a "soft" capacity limit exists. For these types of multiple access systems, the increase of the number of system users beyond a capacity limit causes a decrease in the quality of service to all users of the system. In a CDMA system, the transmissions of each user are seen as interference, or noise, to each other user. Beyond the soft capacity limit of a CDMA system, the noise floor becomes large enough to cause the predetermined allowable BER or FER to be exceeded. In random access schemes, each additional user increases the probability of a message collision. Beyond a capacity limit the message collisions grow so frequent that the need for retransmission or the resultant lost data causes the communication quality of all users to suffer.

[0023] Figure 3 is a graph of the average quality of service to users of such a multiple access communication system

versus the number of users occupying the system, given a specified average data rate for all users. The average quality (Q_{ave}) of service is defined as:

$$Q_{ave} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N Q_i \quad (1)$$

where Q_i is quality of service to user i and N is the number of users on the system.

[0024] Figure 3 also illustrates a quality line above which the average service quality is acceptable and below which the service quality is unacceptable. The intersection of the quality line with the plot of quality versus number of users curve defines the capacity limit of the system at the data rate of the system. In the exemplary embodiment of a CDMA system, messages are transmitted in 20 ms frames, and a tolerable frame error rate of 1% dictates the position of the quality line in the exemplary embodiment. It is understood that different frame sizes and error rates are equally applicable to the present invention.

[0025] Figure 4 illustrates three plots 20, 22, and 24 of average quality of service versus number users for three progressively decreasing average data rates. Plot 20 corresponds to the quality curve for a high average data rate, plot 22 corresponds to the quality curve for a moderate average data rate, and plot 24 corresponds to the quality curve for a low average data rate.

[0026] The first important feature in the plots is that the intersection of the plots with the vertical axis is progressively lower for lower link data rates. Below capacity limits, higher allowable data rates correspond to higher quality, since a high data rate allows more precise quantization of the parameters in the variable rate speech coder, resulting in cleaner sounding speech.

[0027] The second important feature in the plots is the intersections of the quality line with the three plots. The intersections of the quality line with each of the curves 20, 22 and 24 provides the capacity limit for the system at the respective data rates of curves 20, 22 and 24. The system capacities labeled CAP A, CAP B, and CAP C are the number of users that can access the system at the data rates of each of curves 20, 22 and 24. The capacity limit at a given data rate is obtained by dropping a vertical line, as shown in the diagram, from the intersection of the plot and the quality line to the horizontal axis representing the number of users. The capacity of the system increases for a fixed quality level as the data rate decreases.

[0028] Figure 5 is a flowchart illustrating the method of maximizing the average quality by controlling the data rate of transmission on the system. At block 30 the amount of communications resource that is in use is determined, based on the number of users accessing the system on the given link and the data rate transmitted by each user. The usage value computed in block 30 is passed to block 32. In block 32 the usage value is compared against a lower threshold. If the usage value is below the lower threshold then the operation goes to block 34 where it is determined if the link is operating at a predetermined data rate maximum. If the system is operating at the predetermined data rate maximum, the operation moves to block 38 and no action is taken. If the system is operating below the predetermined data rate maximum, the operation proceeds to block 36 and the link data rate is increased.

[0029] If back at block 32 it is determined that the link usage is not too low, the operation proceeds to block 40 where the usage is compared against an upper threshold. If in block 40 the link usage is determined to be below the upper threshold, the operation proceeds to block 41 and no action is taken. If on the other hand, the link usage exceeds the upper threshold in block 40, the operation proceeds to block 42. In block 42, the system data rate is compared against a predetermined minimum. If the system data rate is greater than this predetermined minimum then the operation proceeds to block 44 where the link data rate is decreased.

[0030] If at block 42 the link data rate was determined to be equal to the minimum link data rate then the operation proceeds to block 46. At block 46 the system compares the usage to a predetermined usage maximum. If the communications resource is exhausted, that is the usage is equal to the predetermined maximum, then the operation proceeds to block 48 and access by any additional users is blocked. If the usage is below the predetermined usage maximum then, then operation proceeds to block 50 and no action is taken.

[0031] In TDMA systems, data rates can be modified by spreading data of a given user among a plurality of allocated time slots or combining the data of a plurality of users with selected ones of allocated time slots. In an alternative implementation variable data rates could be achieved in a TDMA system by allocating time slots of varying length to different users. Similarly, in FDMA systems data rates can be modified by spreading data of a given user among a plurality of allocated frequency sub-bands or combining the data of a plurality of users with selected ones of allocated frequency sub-bands. In an alternative implementation variable data rates in a FDMA system could be achieved by allocating varying frequency sub-bands sizes to different users.

[0032] In random access systems the probability of message collisions is proportional to the amount of information each user needs to send. Therefore, the data rate can be adjusted directly by sending varying size packets of data or by sending the packets at varying time intervals between transmission. packets of data or by sending the packets at varying time intervals between transmission.

[0033] In the exemplary embodiment using a CDMA system, the amount of data necessary for transmission of speech is adjusted by use of a variable rate vocoder as detailed in Application Serial No. 08/004,484 mentioned above. The variable rate vocoder of the exemplary embodiment, provides data at full rate, half rate, quarter rate and eighth rate corresponding to 8Kbps, 4Kbps, 2Kbps and 1Kbps, but essentially any maximum average data rate can be attained by combining data rates. For example, a maximum average rate of 7Kbps can be attained by forcing the vocoder to go to half rate every fourth consecutive full rate frame. In the exemplary embodiment, the varying size speech data packet, is segmented and segments are provided at randomized times.

[0034] A useful way of looking at the issue of communications resource capacity is to view the available communications resource as a pie chart, where the whole pie represents the complete exhaustion of the communication resource. In this representation sectors of the pie chart represent fractions of the resource allocated to users, system overhead, and unused resource.

[0035] In a TDMA or FDMA system the whole of the pie chart may represent the number of available time slots or frequency sub-bands in a given allocation strategy. In a random access system, the whole of the pie chart may represent the message rate that is acceptable before message collisions grow so great as to make the transmission link unacceptable. In the exemplary embodiment of a CDMA system, the whole of the pie chart represents the maximum tolerable noise floor wherein the overhead and signal from all other users appear as noise in the reception of the message data to and from the remoter users. In any system configuration, referring back to Figure 3, the whole of the resource pie represents the intersection of the quality line with the average quality versus number of users plot.

[0036] Figure 6 illustrates an example of a general forward link capacity pie chart. The first sector of the resource pie labeled OVERHEAD represents the portion of the transmission signal that does not carry message information. The OVERHEAD fraction of the pie represents the transmission of non-message non-user-specific data and in the exemplary embodiment is a fixed fraction of the communication resource though in other systems this overhead may vary with the number of users or other factors. The OVERHEAD may include base station identification information, timing information and base station setup information among other things. The OVERHEAD may include pilot channel usage of the communications resource. An example of a pilot channel is detailed in U.S. Patent Serial No. 5,103,459, entitled "System and Method for Generating Signal Waveforms in a CDMA Cellular Telephone System (CDMA)," assigned to the assignee of the present invention. Each of the following sectors numbered 1-20 represents a the message information directed to a particular user, where the users are numbered 1-20. The last sector of the pie, moving in a clockwise direction, is labeled with a B. The sector labeled with a B represents the remaining fraction of available communication resource before unacceptable link degradation occurs.

[0037] Figure 7 is a resource pie chart for the reverse link communications. This pie chart represents the information received at the main transmission center or base station from the remote users. The only significant difference between this pie chart and the previous pie chart is in the reverse link there is no fixed OVERHEAD resource. It should also be noted that in the preferred embodiment each user uses the same fraction of communication resource in order to maximize the quality of service to all users. The method and apparatus for maintaining the condition wherein all users use the same fraction of received communication resource is detailed in U.S. Patent No. 5,056,109 entitled "Method and Apparatus for Controlling Transmission Power in a CDMA Cellular Telephone System" assigned to the assignee of the present invention. In this approach, each remote user transmits at a power level such that it is received at the base station as all other remote users. Preferably, each remote user transmits at a minimum power level necessary to insure a quality communication link with a base station.

[0038] Figure 8 is an action pie chart that represents the actions to be followed with respect to the resource pie charts. Labeled on the pie chart of Figure 7 are three points, a point marked INCREASE RATE, a point marked DECREASE RATE and a point marked BLOCK ADDITIONAL USERS. If the fraction of the resource pie for a given link exceeds the point marked DECREASE RATE, the transmission rate on that link should be decreased to improve the quality of service to the users. For example, if the data rate corresponding to plot 20 in figure 4 was being transmitted by all users and the number of users became greater than CAP A, the data rate would be decreased, and the system would then operate on plot 22 in figure 4. If the fraction of the resource pie for a given link falls below the point marked INCREASE RATE, the transmission rate on that link should be increased to improve the quality of service to the users. For example, if the data rate corresponding to plot 22 in figure 4 was being transmitted by all users and the number of users dropped below CAP A, the data rate would be increased and the system would operate on plot 20 in figure 4. If the pie reaches the point marked BLOCK ADDITIONAL USERS then any additional users should be blocked from accessing the system. Note that the only way the system would reach the BLOCK ADDITIONAL USERS point is by going through the DECREASE RATE point which implies that the rate could not be further decreased.

[0039] Figures 9 and 10 illustrate the effects of decreasing the transmission rate on the resource allocation. In Figure

8, the addition of user 20 has caused the resource allocation to surpass the point at which the transmission rate should be decreased. At this point the transmission rate is decreased and the resource pie for the same users looks like Figure 9. Notice the unused portion of the resource pie labeled B is large enough to permit additional users to access the communication resource. Thus, additional users can access the communication system until the system requires the transmission rate to be decreased again. This process will continue until the rate is at a minimum. If this occurs, the system allows the pie to fill entirely and then any new users are prevented from accessing the system.

[0040] In contrast as users leave the communication resource then the fraction of the communication resource that is used decreases below the INCREASE RATE point and the system will increase the transmission rate. This can continue until the transmission rate is increased to a maximum rate or until no users are accessing the communication resource.

[0041] Figure 11 illustrates a block diagram for the monitor and control of the reverse link communication resource usage at the main communications center, which may include the cell base station and the system controller. The signals from the remote users are received at receive antenna 60. The received signals are provided to receiver 62 which provides the data in analog or digital form to energy computation element 66 and demodulators 64. The computed energy value from energy computation element 66 is provided to rate control logic 68 which compares the received signal energy to a series of thresholds. In response to the comparisons, rate control logic 68 provides a rate control signal to microprocessors 70 when the signal energy is above an upper threshold or is below a lower threshold. In other embodiments, the rate control logic 68 could also be responsive to external factors which may affect the performance of the communications channel, such as weather conditions, etc.

[0042] The received signal from receiver 62 are provided to demodulators 64, where it is demodulated and the data for a specific user is extracted and provided to the corresponding microprocessor 70. In the exemplary embodiment, as detailed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 07/433,031 entitled "Method and System for Providing a Soft Handoff in Communication in a CDMA Cellular Telephone System" assigned to the assignee of the present invention, the received data is provided by microprocessors 70 to selector cards (not shown) in a system controller 14 that selects a best received data from received data from a plurality of main communication centers (cells), each of which contains a receiver 62 and a demodulator 64, and decodes the best received data using a vocoder (not shown). The reconstructed speech is then provided to a public telephone switching network (not shown).

[0043] In addition, microprocessors 70 receive data for forward link transmission from the vocoders (not shown) through the data interface. Microprocessors 70 combine the reverse link rate control signal, when present, with the outgoing forward link data to provide composite data packets to modulators 72. In a preferred embodiment, ones of microprocessors 70 would selectively combine the reverse link rate control when present to with outgoing forward link data. In the preferred embodiment, ones microprocessors 70 are responsive to a signal indicative of overriding conditions where upon the reverse rate control signal is not combined with the outgoing forward link data. In an alternate embodiment, certain ones of said microprocessors 70 would not be responsive to the reverse link rate control signal. Modulators 72 modulate the data packets and provide the modulated signals to summer 74. Summer 74 sums the modulated data and provides it to transmitter 76 where amplified and provided to transmission antenna 78.

[0044] Figure 12 illustrates a block diagram of the remote user apparatus of the present invention for responding to the rate control signal provided in the exemplary embodiment by main transmission center 2 in figure 1. On the receive path, the signal that comprises encoded speech data and/or signaling data is received at antenna 90, which also serves as the transmission antenna by means of duplexer 92. The received signal is passed through duplexer 92 to demodulator 96. The signal is then demodulated and provided to microprocessor 98. Microprocessor 98 then decodes the signal and passes the speech data and any rate control data that is sent by the base station to the variable rate vocoder 100. Variable rate Vocoder 100 then decodes the encoded packet of speech data provided from microprocessor 98 and provides the decoded speech data to codec 102. Codec 102 converts the digital speech signal into analog form and provides the analog signal to speaker 106 for playback.

[0045] On the transmit path of the remote user, a speech signal is provided through microphone 106 to codec 102. Codec 102 provides a digital representation of the speech signal to the variable rate vocoder 100 which encodes the speech signal at a rate determined in the exemplary embodiment in accordance with the speech activity and the received rate signal. This encoded speech data is then provided to microprocessor 98.

[0046] In the exemplary embodiment, the rate control signal is a binary signal indicating to the remote user to increase or decrease the maximum data rate. This adjustment of the data rate is done in discrete levels. In the exemplary embodiment, the remote user will increase or decrease its maximum transmission rate by 1000 bps upon receipt rate control signaling from the cell base station. In practice, this reduces the overall average data rate by 400 to 500 bps, since the vocoder is only encoding the speech at the maximum rate 40-50% of the time in a normal two-way conversation. In the exemplary embodiment, the silence between words is always encoded at the lower data rates.

[0047] For example, if the remote user is currently operating with a maximum transmission data rate of full rate or rate 1 (8 Kbps), and a signal decrease its maximum data rate is received, the maximum transmission data rate will be

decreased to 7/8 (7 Kbps) by forcing every fourth consecutive full rate frame of data to be encoded at half rate (4Kbps). If on the other hand, the remote user is operating under control of the cell base station at a maximum transmission rate of 3/4 (6 Kbps) and the cell base station signals the remote user to increase its maximum data rate, then the remote user will use a rate 7/8 (7 Kbps) as a maximum transmission data rate. In a simplified embodiment the rates could simply be limited to one of the discrete rates provided by variable rate vocoder 100 (i.e., rates 1, 1/2, 1/4 and 1/8).

[0048] Microprocessor 98, also, receives non-speech data that can include signaling data or secondary data such as facsimile, modem, or other digital data that needs communication to the cell base station. If the digital data being transmitted by the remote user is of a form not conducive to variable rate transmission (i.e. some facsimile or modem data) then microprocessor 98 can decide based upon the service option of the remote user whether to vary the transmission rate in response to the rate control signal.

[0049] Modulator 108 modulates the data signal and provides the modulated signal to transmitter 110 where it is amplified and provide through duplexer 92 to antenna 90 and transmitted over the air to the base station. It is also envisioned in the present invention that the remote user could monitor the reverse link communication resource and respond in an open loop manner to adjust its transmission rate.

[0050] Figure 13 illustrates a block diagram of an exemplary forward link rate control apparatus. Speech data is provided to vocoders 120 where the speech data is encoded at a variable rate. In the present invention the encoding rate for the speech data is determined in accordance with the speech activity and a rate control signal when present. The encoded speech is then provided to microprocessors 122, which also may receive non-speech data from an external source (not shown). This non-speech data can include signaling data or secondary data (facsimile, modem or other digital data for transmission). Microprocessors 122 then provide data packets to modulators 124 where the data packets are modulated and provided to summer 126. Summer 126 sums the modulated signal from modulators 124 and provides the sum signal to transmitter 128 where the signal is mixed with a carrier signal, amplified and provided to antenna 130 for transmission.

[0051] The summed modulated signal from summer 126 is also provided to energy computation unit 132. Energy computation unit 132 computes the energy of the signal from summer 126 for a fixed time period and provides this energy estimate to rate control logic 134. Rate control logic 134 compares the energy estimate to a series of thresholds, and provides a rate control signal in accordance with these comparisons. The rate control signal is provided to microprocessors 122. Microprocessors 122 provide the rate control signal to vocoders 120 for control of the maximum data rate of speech data. Optionally, microprocessors 122 can also use the rate control signal to control the data rate of non-speech data sources (not shown). the rate control signal can be provided selectively to ones of microprocessors 122 or alternately selects ones of microprocessors 122 can be responsive to a globally provided rate control signal.

[0052] The open loop form of control on the forward link described above can also operate in a closed loop, which can be responsive to signals from the remote stations indicative of capacity limits being reached, such as high frame error rates or other measurable quantities. Rate control logic 134 can be responsive to external interferences of various kinds which may also affect the performance of the communications channel.

[0053] The previous description of the preferred embodiments is provided to enable any person skilled in the art to make or use the present invention. The various modifications to these embodiments will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, and the generic principles defined herein may be applied to other embodiments without the use of the inventive faculty. Thus, the present invention is not intended to be limited to the embodiments shown herein but is to be accorded the widest scope consistent with the principles and novel features disclosed herein.

Claims

1. A subsystem for optimizing communications quality by altering reverse link transmission data rates in accordance with system usage and capacity and by blocking additional remote users if the system usage is equal to a predetermined maximum in a communications network system wherein a plurality of remote users (4) each having a transmitter (110) communicate message signals at a reverse link transmission data rate to a communications center (2) having a receiver (62), said subsystem comprising:

monitor means for determining said system usage and conditionally based on said system usage providing a reverse link rate control signal in accordance with said system usage; and

a plurality of response means each collocated with a corresponding one of said remote users (4)

for receiving said reverse link rate control signal and adjusting said reverse link transmission data rate of active message information of said corresponding one of said remote users (4) in accordance with said reverse link rate control signal and

for encoding said active message as a plurality of transmission frames, wherein variable data source means are responsive to said rate control signal for encoding a subset of said plurality of transmission frames at a reduced encoding rate while providing other frames of said plurality of transmission frames at a higher encoding rate.

- 5 2. The subsystem of Claim 1 wherein said monitor means is collocated with said communications center (2) said subsystem further comprising:

10 communications center transmitter means (76) for transmitting messages to said remote users (4) and for transmitting said rate control signal to said remote users (4); and
plurality of remote receiver means (94) each of said plurality of remote receiver (94) collocated with a corresponding one of said remote users (4) for receiving said rate control signal and for providing said rate control signal to a corresponding one of said response means.

- 15 3. The subsystem of Claim 1 wherein said monitor means determines said system usage by measuring the energy of said message signals for a predetermined time period.

4. The subsystem of Claim 1 wherein said response means comprises:

20 processor means (98) for receiving said rate control signal and providing a rate command signals in response to said rate control signal; and
variable rate vocoder means (100) for receiving speech data and said rate command signals and encoding said speech data at a rate in accordance with said command signals.

- 25 5. The subsystem of Claim 4 wherein said variable rate vocoder means (100) further encodes said speech data in accordance with the energy of said speech data.

6. The subsystem of Claim 4 wherein said processor means (98) is further for receiving non-speech data for transmission and for providing said non-speech data at a rate in accordance with said rate control signal.

- 30 7. A variable rate transceiver for a communication system in which a base station transmits a reverse link rate control command related to system usage and capacity, said variable rate transceiver being remotely located from said base station and comprising:

35 a receiver (94) for receiving a signal from the base station and comprising message data and said reverse link rate control command;
a variable rate vocoder (100) for receiving active speech data and encoding said active speech data as a plurality of transmission frames, wherein said vocoder is responsive to said rate control signal for encoding a subset of said plurality of transmission frames at a reduced encoding rate while providing other frames of said
40 plurality of transmission frames at a higher encoding rate ; and
a transmitter (110) for transmitting said encoded frames of active speech data.

8. The variable rate transceiver of Claim 7 further comprising:

45 a demodulator (96) disposed between said receiver (94) and said variable rate vocoder (100) for demodulating said received signal; and
a processor (98) disposed between demodulator (96) and said variable rate vocoder (100) for receiving said demodulated signal and separately providing said message data and said rate control command.

- 50 9. The variable rate transceiver of Claim 8 wherein said processor (98) is further for receiving non-speech data for transmission.

10. The variable rate transceiver of Claim 7 further comprising a modulator (108) disposed between said variable rate vocoder (100) and said transmitter (110) for modulating said encoded speech data.

- 55 11. The variable rate transceiver of Claim 8 further comprising a modulator (108) disposed between said variable rate vocoder (100) and said transmitter (110) for modulating said encoded speech data.

12. An apparatus of controlling the data rate of message communications in a two-way communication system wherein a base station communicates messages on a forward link with a plurality of remote users (4), said apparatus comprising:

usage determination means (132) for determining a usage value of said forward link;
rate control logic means (134) for receiving said usage value, comparing said usage value to at least one predetermined threshold value and conditionally providing a forward link rate control signal in accordance with said comparisons; and
variable rate data source means for receiving an active message and encoding said active message as a plurality of transmission frames, wherein said variable data source means is responsive to said forward link rate control signal for encoding a subset of said plurality of transmission frames at a reduced encoding rate while providing other frames of said plurality of transmission frames at a higher encoding rate.

13. The apparatus of Claim 15 wherein said variable rate data source means comprises at least one variable rate vocoder means (120) for encoding speech data at variable rates.

14. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said usage determination means (132) measures the energy of a signal said signal for transmission to said remote users (4).

15. A method for optimizing usage of a multiple access communications resource, comprising the steps of:

measuring said usage of said communications resource;
comparing said measured usage against at least one predetermined threshold;
generating a rate control signal in accordance with said comparison; and
encoding an active message as a plurality of transmission frames, wherein said encoding encodes a subset of said plurality of transmission frames at a reduced encoding rate while encoding other frames of said plurality of transmission frames at a higher encoding rate responsive to said rate control signal.

16. The method of Claim 15 wherein said step of comparing said measured usage against at least one predetermined threshold comprises comparing said usage against a predetermined high usage threshold, and wherein said step of encoding message comprises decreasing the encoding rate of communications when said usage exceeds said high usage threshold.

17. The method of Claim 15 wherein said step of comparing said measured usage against at least one predetermined threshold comprises comparing said usage against a predetermined low usage threshold, and wherein said step of encoding message comprises increasing the encoding rate of communications when said usage falls below said low usage threshold.

18. A subsystem for optimizing communications quality in accordance with system usage and capacity in a spread spectrum communications network wherein a plurality of remote users (4) each having a transmitter (110) communicate message signals to a communications center (2) having a receiver (62), said subsystem comprising:

an energy computation element (66) which determines based on the energy of received signals said system usage;
rate control logic conditionally providing a rate control signal in accordance with said system usage level, which causes lower data rates to be used if the system usage is determined to be above a predetermined level;
a plurality of encoder means collocated with said remote users for encoding said message signals in accordance with said rate control signal; and
a plurality of spread spectrum transmitters (110) which transmit said message signals in accordance with a spread spectrum modulation format.

19. The subsystem of Claim 18 wherein said energy computation element is collocated with said transmission center (2) said subsystem further comprising:

communications center transmitter (76) which transmits messages to said remote users (4) in accordance with said spread spectrum modulation format and transmits said rate control signal to said remote users (4); and plurality of remote receivers (94), each of said plurality of remote receivers (94) collocated with a corresponding one of said remote users (4) for receiving said rate control signal in accordance with said spread

spectrum de-modulation format.

20. The subsystem of Claim 18 wherein said receiver (94) comprises:

processor (98) which receives said rate control signal and provides rate command signals in response to said rate control signal; and
variable rate vocoder (100) which receives speech data and said rate command signals and encoding said speech data at a rate in accordance with said command signals.

21. The subsystem of Claim 20 wherein said variable rate vocoder (100) further encodes said speech data in accordance with the energy of said speech data.

22. The subsystem of Claim 20 wherein said processor (98) also receiving non-speech data for transmission and for providing said non-speech data at a rate in accordance with said rate control signal.

23. A variable rate transceiver-according to claim 7, wherein the transceiver is a spread spectrum transceiver.

24. The variable rate transceiver of Claim 23 further comprising:

a spread spectrum demodulator (96) disposed between said receiver (94) and said variable rate vocoder (100) for demodulating said received signal in accordance with a spread spectrum de-modulation format; and
a processor (98) disposed between said spread spectrum demodulator (96) and said variable rate vocoder (100) for receiving said demodulated signal and separately providing said message data and said rate control command.

25. The variable rate spread spectrum transceiver of Claim 24 wherein said processor (98) is further for receiving non-speech data for transmission.

26. The variable rate spread spectrum transceiver of Claim 23 further comprising a modulator (108) disposed between said variable rate vocoder (100) and said transmitter (110) for modulating said encoded speech data.

27. The variable rate transceiver of Claim 24 further comprising a modulator (108) disposed between said variable rate vocoder (100) and said transmitter (110) for modulating said encoded speech data.

28. An apparatus for controlling the user capacity of a spread spectrum base station; said apparatus comprising:

an energy computation element (66) which determines based on the energy of received signals usage of said base station;
comparator (68) which compares said measured usage against a predetermined value and selectively providing a rate control signal in accordance with said comparisons, said rate control signal commanding a reduction in data rates when said measured usage is greater than said predetermined value; and
a transmitter (76) which transmits said rate control signal in accordance with a spread spectrum modulation format.

29. The apparatus of Claim 28 further comprising processor (122) which receives message data for transmission to said remote users (4) and said rate control signal and combining said message data with said rate control signal to provide a composite data packet.

30. The apparatus of Claim 29 further comprising a spread spectrum modulator (124) disposed between said processor (122) and transmitter (128), the modulator (124) modulating said composite data packet in accordance with said spread spectrum modulation format.

31. A base station in a spread spectrum communication system wherein said base station communicates messages on a forward link with a plurality of remote users (4) an apparatus for controlling the data rate of said message communications, comprising:

an energy computation element (132) which determines based on the energy of the transmission signal the usage value of said forward link;

rate control logic (134) which receives said usage value, comparing said usage value to at least one predetermined threshold value and conditionally providing a rate control signal in accordance with said comparisons; and
at least one variable rate data source for transmitting data at a rate in accordance with said rate control signal in accordance with a spread spectrum modulation format.

32. The apparatus of Claim 31 wherein said at least one variable rate data source comprises at least one variable rate vocoder (120) which encodes speech data at variable rates.

33. A method for optimizing usage of a multiple access spread spectrum communications resource, comprising the steps of:

measuring received energy to determine said usage of said communications resource;
comparing said determined usage against at least one predetermined threshold;
adjusting data rates of communications on said communications resource in accordance with said comparisons; and
transmitting said communications of said adjusted rates in accordance with a spread spectrum modulation format.

34. The method of Claim 33 wherein said step of comparing said determined usage against at least one predetermined threshold comprises comparing said usage against a predetermined high usage threshold, and wherein said step of adjusting data rates of communications on said communications resource comprises decreasing the data rate of communications when said usage exceeds said high usage threshold.

35. The method of Claim 33 wherein said step of comparing said determined usage against at least one predetermined threshold comprises comparing said usage against a predetermined low usage threshold, and wherein said step of adjusting data rates of communications on said communications resource comprises increasing the data rate of communications when said usage falls below said low usage threshold.

Patentansprüche

1. Teil- bzw. Untersystem zur Optimierung von Kommunikationsqualität durch Verändern der Übertragungsdatenraten der rückwärtigen Verbindung in Abhängigkeit der Systemausnutzung bzw. -Auslastung und Kapazität und durch Blockieren von zusätzlichen Fernbenutzern, wenn die Systemauslastung gleich einem vorbestimmten Maximum ist, und zwar in einem Kommunikationsnetzwerkssystem, in dem eine Vielzahl von Fernbenutzern (4) mit jeweils einem Sender (110) Nachrichtensignale mit einer rückwärtigen Verbindungsübertragungsdatenrate zu einem Kommunikationscenter (2), der einen Empfänger (62) hat, kommunizieren, wobei das Teilsystem Folgendes aufweist:

Überwachungsmittel zum Bestimmen der Systemauslastung und zum bedingtem basierend auf der Systemauslastung, Vorsehen eines Ratensteuersignals für die rückwärtige Verbindung gemäß der Systemauslastung;
eine Vielzahl von Ansprechmitteln, die jeweils einem Entsprechenden der Fernbenutzer (4) beigeordnet sind zum Empfangen des Ratensteuersignals für die rückwärtige Verbindung und Anpassen der Übertragungsdatenrate der rückwärtigen Verbindung von aktiven Nachrichteninformationen des entsprechenden der Fernbenutzer (4) gemäß dem Ratensteuersignal der rückwärtigen Verbindung und zum Codieren der aktiven Nachricht als eine Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen, wobei variable Datenquellenmittel ansprechend sind auf das Ratensteuersignal zum Codieren eines Subsets der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer reduzierten Codierate, wobei andere Rahmen der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer höheren Codierate vorgesehen werden.

2. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Überwachungsmittel dem Kommunikationscenter (2) beigeordnet sind, wobei das Teilsystem weiterhin Folgendes aufweist:

Sendemittel des Kommunikationscenters (76) zum Senden von Nachrichten zu den entfernten Benutzern (4) und zum Senden des Ratensteuersignals zu den Fernbenutzern (4); und
eine Vielzahl von Fernempfängermitteln (94), wobei die Vielzahl von Fernempfängern (94) einem Entspre-

chenden der Fernbenutzer (4) beigeordnet ist zum Empfangen des Ratensteuersignals und zum Vorsehen des Ratensteuersignals an ein Entsprechendes der Ansprechmittel.

3. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Überwachungsmittel die Systemauslastung durch Messen der Energie der Nachrichtensignale über eine vorbestimmte Zeitperiode bestimmen.

4. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Ansprechmittel Folgendes aufweisen:

Prozessormittel (98) zum Empfangen des Ratensteuersignals und zum Vorsehen eines Ratenbefehlssignals ansprechend auf das Ratensteuersignal; und
variable Ratenvocodermittel (100) zum Empfangen von Sprachdaten und des Ratenbefehlssignals und zum Codieren der Sprachdaten mit einer Rate gemäß dem Befehlssignal.

5. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 4, wobei die variablen Raten Vocodermittel (100) weiterhin die Sprachdaten gemäß der Energie der Sprachdaten codiert.

6. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 4, wobei die Prozessormittel (98) weiter zum Empfangen von Nicht-Sprachdaten für Übertragung und zum Vorsehen der Nicht-Sprachdaten mit einer Rate gemäß dem Ratensteuersignal dienen.

7. Variabler Ratentransceiver für ein Kommunikationssystem, in welchem eine Basisstation einen Ratensteuerbefehl für die rückwärtige Verbindung bezüglich der Systemauslastung und der Kapazität sendet, wobei der variable Ratentransceiver entfernt von der Basisstation angeordnet ist und Folgendes aufweist:

einen Empfänger (94) zum Empfangen eines Signals von der Basisstation, welches Nachrichtendaten und den Ratensteuerbefehl für die rückwärtige Verbindung aufweist;
einen variablen Ratenvocoder (100) zum Empfangen von aktiven Sprachdaten und zum Codieren der Sprachdaten als eine Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen, wobei der Vocoder ansprechend ist auf das Ratensteuersignal zum Codieren eines Subsets der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer reduzierten Codierrate, während andere Rahmen der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer höheren Codierrate vorgesehen werden;
einen Sender (110) zum Senden der codierten Rahmen von aktiven Sprachdaten.

8. Variabler Ratentransceiver nach Anspruch 7, der weiterhin Folgendes aufweist:

einen Demodulator (96), der sich zwischen dem Empfänger (94) und dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) befindet, zum Demodulieren des empfangenen Signals; und
einen Prozessor (98), der sich zwischen dem Demodulator (96) und dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) befindet, zum Empfangen des demodulierten Signals und separat die Nachrichtendaten und den Ratensteuerbefehl vorsieht.

9. Variabler Ratentransceiver nach Anspruch 8, wobei der Prozessor (98) weiter dafür dient, Nicht-Sprachdaten für die Übertragung zu empfangen.

10. Variabler Ratentransceiver nach Anspruch 7, der weiterhin einen Modulator (108) aufweist, der sich zwischen dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) und dem Sender (110) befindet, zum Modulieren der codierten Sprachdaten.

11. Variable Ratentransceiver nach Anspruch 8, der weiterhin einen Modulator (108) aufweist, der sich zwischen dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) und dem Transmitter (110) befindet, zum Modulieren der codierten Sprachdaten.

12. Vorrichtung zum Steuern der Datenraten von Nachrichtenkommunikation in einem Zweiwege-Kommunikationssystem, wobei eine Basisstation Nachrichten auf einer Vorwärtsverbindung mit einer Vielzahl von Fernbenutzern (4) kommuniziert, wobei die Vorrichtung folgendes aufweist:

Auslastungsbestimmungsmittel (132) zum Bestimmen eines Auslastungswerts der Vorwärtsverbindung;
Ratensteuerlogikmittel (134) zum Empfangen des Auslastungswerts, die den Auslastungswert mit einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert vergleicht und bedingt ein Ratensteuersignal für die Vorwärtsverbindung gemäß dieser Vergleiche vorsieht;

variable Ratendatenquellenmittel zum Empfangen einer aktiven Nachricht und zum Codieren der aktiven Nachricht als eine Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen, wobei die variablen Datenquellenmittel ansprechend sind auf das Ratensteuersignal der Vorwärtsverbindung zum Codieren eines Subsets der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer reduzierten Codierrate, während andere Rahmen der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer höheren Codierrate vorgesehen werden.

13. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 15, wobei die variablen Ratendatenquellenmittel zumindest ein variables Ratenvocodermittel (120) zum Codieren von Sprachdaten mit variablen Raten aufweist.

14. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 12, wobei die Auslastungsbestimmungsmittel (132) die Energie eines Signals mißt, und zwar des Signals für die Übertragung zu den Fernbenutzern (4).

15. Verfahren zum Optimieren der Auslastung einer Vielfachzugriffskommunikationsresource, wobei das Verfahren die folgenden Schritte aufweist:

Messen der Auslastung der Kommunikationsresource;
Vergleichen der gemessenen Auslastung mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert;
Erzeugen eines Ratensteuersignals gemäß diesem Vergleich; und
Codieren einer aktiven Nachricht als eine Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen, wobei bei dem Codieren ein Subset der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer reduzierten Codierrate codiert wird, während andere Rahmen der Vielzahl von Übertragungsrahmen mit einer höheren Codierrate ansprechend auf das Ratensteuersignal codiert werden.

16. Verfahren nach Anspruch 15, wobei der Schritt des Vergleichens der gemessenen Auslastung mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert beinhaltet, daß die Auslastung mit einem vorbestimmten Hochauslastungsschwellenwert verglichen wird und wobei der Schritt des Codierens einer Nachricht beinhaltet, daß die Codierrate von Kommunikationen gesenkt wird, wenn die Auslastung den Hochauslastungsschwellenwert überschreitet.

17. Verfahren nach Anspruch 15, wobei der Schritt des Vergleichens der gemessenen Auslastung mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert beinhaltet, daß die Auslastung gegen einen vorbestimmten Niedrigauslastungsschwellenwert verglichen wird, und wobei der Schritt des Codierens einer Nachricht beinhaltet, daß die Codierrate von Kommunikationen erhöht wird, wenn die Auslastung unter den Niedrigauslastungsschwellenwert sinkt.

18. Teilsystem zum Optimieren von Kommunikationsqualität gemäß Systemauslastung und Kapazität in einem Bandpreis-kommunikationsnetzwerk, wobei eine Vielzahl von Fernbenutzern (4), die jeweils einen Sender (110) haben, Nachrichtensignale zu einem Kommunikationscenter (2), der einen Empfänger (62) hat, kommunizieren, wobei das Teilsystem Folgendes aufweist:

ein Energieberechnungselement (66), das basierend auf der Energie der empfangenen Signale die Systemauslastung bestimmt;
eine Ratensteuerlogik, die bedingt ein Ratensteuersignal gemäß dem Systemauslastungspegel vorsieht, welches bewirkt, daß niedrigere Datenraten eingesetzt werden, wenn die Systemauslastung oberhalb eines vorbestimmten Pegels bestimmt wird;
eine Vielzahl von Codiermitteln, die den Fernbenutzern beigeordnet sind, zum Codieren der Nachrichtensignale gemäß dem Ratensteuersignal; und
eine Vielzahl von Bandspreizsendern (110), die die Nachrichtensignale gemäß einem Bandspreizmodulationsformat senden.

19. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 18, wobei das Energieberechnungselement dem Übertragungscenter (2) beigeordnet ist, wobei das Teilsystem weiterhin Folgendes aufweist:

einen Kommunikationscentersender (76); der Nachrichten an die Fernbenutzer (4) gemäß dem Bandspreizmodulationsformat sendet und das Ratensteuersignal an die Fernbenutzer (4) sendet; und
eine Vielzahl von Fernempfängern (24), wobei jeder der Vielzahl von Fernempfängern (94) einem Entsprechenden der Fernbenutzer (4) beigeordnet ist zum Empfangen des Ratensteuersignals gemäß dem Bandspreizdemodulationsformat.

20. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 18, wobei der Empfänger (94) folgendes aufweist:

Prozessor (98), der das Ratensteuersignal empfängt und Ratenbefehlssignale ansprechend auf das Ratensteuersignal vorsieht; und
einen variablen Ratenvocoder (100), der Sprachdaten und das die Ratenbefehlssignale empfängt und die Sprachdaten einer Rate gemäß der Befehlssignale codiert.

21. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 20, wobei der variable Ratenvocoder (100) weiter die Sprachdaten gemäß der Energie der Sprachdaten codiert.

22. Teilsystem nach Anspruch 20, wobei der Prozessor (98) außerdem Nicht-Sprachdaten für die Übertragung empfängt und die Nicht-Sprachdaten mit einer Rate gemäß dem Ratensteuersignal vorsieht.

23. Variabler Ratentransceiver gemäß Anspruch 7, wobei der Transceiver ein Bandspreiztransceiver ist.

24. Variabler Ratentransceiver nach Anspruch 23, der weiterhin Folgendes aufweist:

einen Bandspreizdemodulator (96), der sich zwischen dem Empfänger (94) und dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) zum Demodulieren des empfangenen Signals gemäß einem Bandspreizdemodulationsformat vorsieht; und

einen Prozessor (98), der sich zwischen dem Bandspreizdemodulator (96) und dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) befindet, zum Empfangen des demodulierten Signals und zum separaten Vorsehen der Nachrichtendaten und des Ratensteuerbefehls.

25. Variabler Ratenbandspreiztransceiver nach Anspruch 24, wobei der Prozessor (98) weiterhin zum Empfangen von Nicht-Sprachdaten zur Übertragung dient.

26. Variabler Ratenbandspreiztransceiver nach Anspruch 23, der weiterhin einen Modulator (108) aufweist, der sich zwischen dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) und dem Sender (110) befindet, zum Modulieren der codierten Sprachdaten.

27. Variabler Ratentransceiver nach Anspruch 24, der weiterhin einen Modulator (108) aufweist, der sich zwischen dem variablen Ratenvocoder (100) und dem Sender (110) zum Modulieren der codierten Sprachdaten befindet.

28. Vorrichtung zum Steuern der Benutzerkapazität an einer Bandspreizbasisstation, wobei die Vorrichtung Folgendes aufweist:

ein Energieberechnungselement (66), welches basierend auf der Energie der empfangenen Signale die Auslastung der Basisstation berechnet;
einen Vergleichler (68), der die gemessene Auslastung mit einem vorbestimmten Wert vergleicht und selektiv ein Ratensteuersignal gemäß der Vergleiche vorsieht, wobei das Ratensteuersignal eine Reduzierung der Datenraten befiehlt, wenn die gemessene Auslastung größer ist als der vorbestimmte Wert; und
einen Sender (76), der das Ratensteuersignal sendet gemäß einem Bandspreizmodulationsformats.

29. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 28, die weiterhin einen Prozessor (122) aufweist, der die Nachrichtendaten für die Übertragung zu den Fernbenutzern (4) und das Ratensteuersignal empfängt und die Nachrichtendaten mit dem Ratensteuersignal kombiniert, um ein zusammengesetztes Datenpaket zu liefern.

30. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 29, die weiterhin einen Bandspreizmodulator (124) aufweist, der sich zwischen dem Prozessor (122) und dem Sender (128) befindet, wobei der Modulator (124) das zusammengesetzte Datenpaket gemäß einem Bandspreizmodulationsformat moduliert.

31. Basisstation in einem Bandspreizkommunikationssystem, wobei die Basisstation Nachrichten kommuniziert auf einer Vorwärtsverbindung mit einer Vielzahl von Fernbenutzern (4), wobei eine Vorrichtung zum Steuern der Datenraten der Nachrichtenkommunikationen Folgendes aufweist:

ein Energieberechnungselement (132), das basierend auf der Energie des Übertragungssignals den Auslastungswert der Vorwärtsverbindung bestimmt; und
eine Ratensteuerlogik (134), die den Auslastungswert empfängt, den Auslastungswert mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert vergleicht und bedingt ein Ratensteuersignal gemäß dieser Vergleiche vorsieht;

und

zumindest eine variable Ratendatenquelle zum Senden von Daten mit einer Rate gemäß dem Ratensteuersignal vorsieht gemäß einem Bandspreizmodulationsformats.

32. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 31, wobei die zumindest eine variable Ratendatenquelle zumindest einen variablen Ratenvocoder (120) aufweist, der Sprachdaten mit variablen Raten codiert.

33. Verfahren zum Optimieren der Auslastung einer Vielfachzugriffsbandspreizkommunikationsresource, wobei das Verfahren die folgenden Schritte aufweist:

Messen der empfangenen Energie, um die Auslastung der Kommunikationsresource zu bestimmen;
Vergleichen der bestimmten Auslastung mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert;
Anpassen der Datenraten von Kommunikationen der Kommunikationsresource gemäß den Vergleichen; und
Senden der Kommunikationen der angepaßten Raten gemäß einem Bandspreizmodulationsformats.

34. Verfahren nach Anspruch 33, wobei der Schritt des Vergleichens der bestimmten Auslastung mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert beinhaltet, daß die Auslastung mit einem vorbestimmten Hochauslastungsschwellenwert verglichen wird, und wobei der Schritt des Anpassens der Datenraten der Kommunikationen der Kommunikationsresource beinhaltet, daß die Datenrate von Kommunikationen gesenkt wird, wenn die Auslastung den Hochauslastungsschwellenwert überschreitet.

35. Verfahren nach Anspruch 33, wobei der Schritt des Vergleichens der bestimmten Auslastung mit zumindest einem vorbestimmten Schwellenwert beinhaltet, daß die Auslastung mit einem vorbestimmten Niedrigauslastungsschwellenwert verglichen wird und wobei der Schritt des Anpassens der Datenraten von Kommunikationen der Kommunikationsresource beinhaltet, daß die Datenraten der Kommunikationen gesenkt wird, wenn die Auslastung unter dem Niedrigauslastungsschwellenwert fällt.

Revendications

1. Sous-système pour optimiser la qualité de communications en modifiant des débits de données d'émission en liaison inverse en fonction de l'utilisation et de la capacité du système et en bloquant des utilisateurs éloignés supplémentaires si l'utilisation du système est égale à un maximum prédéterminé dans un système de communication dans lequel une pluralité d'utilisateurs éloignés (4) disposant chacun d'un émetteur (110) communiquent des signaux de message à un débit de données de transmission en liaison inverse vers un centre de communication (2) comportant un récepteur (62), le sous-système comprenant :

un moyen de surveillance pour déterminer l'utilisation du système et pour fournir un signal de commande de débit en liaison inverse en fonction de l'utilisation du système ; et

une pluralité de moyens de réponse dont chacun est associé à l'un correspondant des utilisateurs éloignés (4),

pour recevoir le signal de commande de débit en liaison inverse et régler le débit de données de transmission en liaison inverse des informations de message actif de l'un correspondant des utilisateurs éloignés (4) en fonction du signal de commande de débit en liaison inverse, et

pour coder le message actif sous forme d'une pluralité de trames d'émission, dans lequel le moyen de source de données variables agit en réponse au signal de commande de débit pour coder un sous-ensemble de la pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage réduit tout en fournissant les autres trames de la pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage plus élevé.

2. Sous-système selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le moyen de surveillance est situé au niveau du centre de communication (2), le système comprenant en outre :

un moyen d'émetteur de centre de communication (76) pour émettre des messages vers les utilisateurs éloignés (4) et pour émettre le signal de commande de débit vers les utilisateurs éloignés (4) ; et

une pluralité de moyens de récepteurs éloignés (94), chaque récepteur éloigné (94) étant associé à l'un correspondant des utilisateurs (4) pour recevoir le signal de commande de débit et pour fournir le signal de commande de débit à l'un correspondant des moyens de réponse.

3. Sous-système selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le moyen de surveillance détermine l'utilisation du système en mesurant l'énergie des signaux de message sur une durée prédéterminée.

4. Sous-système selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le moyen de réponse comprend :

un moyen de processeur (98) pour recevoir le signal de commande de débit et fournir un signal d'ordre de débit en réponse au signal de commande de débit ; et
un moyen de vocodeur à débit variable (100) pour recevoir des données de parole et les signaux d'ordre de débit et coder les données de parole à un débit fonction desdits signaux d'ordre.

5. Sous-système selon la revendication 4, dans lequel le moyen de vocodeur à débit variable (100) code en outre les données de parole en fonction de l'énergie des données de parole.

6. Sous-système selon la revendication 4, dans lequel le moyen de processeur (98) est en outre adapté à recevoir des données non de parole pour émission et à fournir les données non de parole à une cadence fonction du signal de commande de débit.

7. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable pour un système de communication dans lequel une station de base fournit un ordre de commande de débit en liaison inverse associé à l'utilisation et à la capacité du système, cet émetteur-récepteur à débit variable étant disposé de façon éloignée par rapport à la station de base et comprenant :

un récepteur (94) pour recevoir un signal en provenance de la station de base et comprenant des données de message et l'ordre de commande de débit de liaison inverse ;
un vocodeur à débit variable (100) pour recevoir les données de parole actives et coder les données de parole actives sous forme d'une pluralité de trames d'émission, dans lequel le vocodeur agit en réponse au signal de commande de débit pour coder un sous-ensemble de la pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage réduit tout en fournissant les autres trames de la pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage plus élevé ; et
un émetteur (110) pour émettre les trames codées de données de parole actives.

8. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication 7, comprenant en outre :

un démodulateur (96) disposé entre le récepteur (94) et le vocodeur à débit variable (100) pour démoduler le signal reçu ; et
un processeur (98) disposé entre le démodulateur (96) et le vocodeur à débit variable (100) pour recevoir le signal démodulé et fournir séparément les données de message et l'ordre de commande de débit.

9. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication 8, dans lequel le processeur (98) est en outre adapté à recevoir des données non de parole pour émission.

10. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication 7, comprenant en outre un modulateur (108) disposé entre le vocodeur à débit variable (100) et l'émetteur (110) pour moduler les données de parole codées.

11. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication 8, comprenant en outre un modulateur (108) disposé entre le vocodeur à débit variable (100) et l'émetteur (110) pour moduler les données de parole codées.

12. Appareil pour commander le débit de données de communication de message dans un système de communication bidirectionnel dans lequel une station de base communique des messages sur une liaison directe à une pluralité d'utilisateurs (4) éloignés, cet appareil comprenant :

un moyen de détermination d'utilisation (132) pour déterminer une valeur d'utilisation de la liaison directe ;
un moyen logique de commande de débit (134) pour recevoir la valeur d'utilisation, comparer cette valeur d'utilisation à au moins une valeur de seuil prédéterminée, et fournir de façon conditionnelle un signal de commande de débit de liaison directe en fonction desdites comparaisons ; et
un moyen de source de données à débit variable pour recevoir un message actif et coder le message actif sous forme d'une pluralité de trames d'émission, dans lequel le moyen de source de données variables agit en réponse au signal de commande de débit de liaison directe pour coder un sous-ensemble de ladite pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage réduit tout en fournissant les autres trames de la pluralité de trames

d'émission à un débit de codage plus élevé.

13. Appareil selon la revendication 12, dans lequel le moyen de source de données à débit variable comprend au moins un moyen de vocodeur à débit variable (120) pour coder des données de parole à des débits variables.

14. Appareil selon la revendication 12, dans lequel le moyen de détermination d'utilisation (132) mesure l'énergie d'un signal, ledit signal étant destiné à une émission vers les utilisateurs (4) éloignés.

15. Procédé d'optimisation de l'utilisation d'un système de communication à accès multiples comprenant les étapes suivantes :

mesurer l'utilisation du système de communication ;
comparer l'utilisation mesurée à au moins un seuil prédéterminé ;
produire un signal de commande de débit en fonction de ladite comparaison ; et
coder un message actif sous forme d'une pluralité de trames d'émission, dans lequel ledit codage code un sous-ensemble de la pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage réduit, tout en codant les autres trames de la pluralité de trames d'émission à un débit de codage plus élevé en réponse au signal de commande de débit.

16. Procédé selon la revendication 15, dans lequel l'étape de comparaison entre l'utilisation mesurée et au moins un seuil prédéterminé comprend la comparaison de l'utilisation à un seuil d'utilisation haut prédéterminé, et l'étape de codage de message comprend la réduction du débit de codage des communications quand l'utilisation dépasse le seuil d'utilisation haut.

17. Procédé selon la revendication 15, dans lequel l'étape de comparaison entre l'utilisation mesurée et au moins un seuil prédéterminé comprend la comparaison de l'utilisation à un seuil d'utilisation bas prédéterminé, et l'étape de codage de message comprend une augmentation du débit de codage des communications quand l'utilisation passe sous le seuil d'utilisation bas.

18. Sous-système d'optimisation de la qualité de communication en fonction de l'utilisation et de la capacité du système dans un réseau de communication à étalement de spectre dans lequel une pluralité d'utilisateurs éloignés (4) disposant chacun d'un émetteur (110) communiquent des signaux de message à un centre de communication (2) muni d'un récepteur (62), le sous-système comprenant :

un élément de calcul d'énergie (66) qui détermine, sur la base de l'énergie de signaux reçus, l'utilisation du système ;
un circuit logique de commande de débit fournissant de façon conditionnelle un signal de commande de débit en fonction du niveau d'utilisation du système, qui amène des débits de données plus faibles à être utilisés si l'utilisation du système est déterminée comme étant au-dessus d'un niveau prédéterminé ;
une pluralité de moyens codeurs disposés au niveau des utilisateurs éloignés pour coder des signaux de message en fonction du signal de commande de débit ; et
une pluralité d'émetteurs à étalement de spectre (110) qui émettent les signaux de message selon un format de modulation à étalement de spectre.

19. Sous-système selon la revendication 18, dans lequel l'élément de calcul d'énergie est associé au centre d'émission (2), le sous-système comprenant en outre :

un émetteur de centre de communication (76) qui émet des messages vers des utilisateurs éloignés (4) selon le format de modulation à étalement de spectre et émet le signal de commande de débit vers les utilisateurs éloignés (4) ; et une pluralité de récepteurs éloignés (94), chacun des récepteurs éloignés (94) étant associé à l'un correspondant des utilisateurs éloignés (4), pour recevoir le signal de commande de débit selon le format de démodulation à étalement de spectre.

20. Sous-système selon la revendication 18, dans lequel le récepteur (94) comprend :

un moyen de processeur (98) qui reçoit le signal de commande de débit et fournit des signaux d'ordre de débit en réponse au signal de commande de débit ; et
un vocodeur à débit variable (100) qui reçoit des données de parole et les signaux d'ordre de débit et qui code

les données de parole à un débit qui correspond aux ordres de débit.

21. Sous-système selon la revendication 20, dans lequel le vocodeur à débit variable (100) code en outre les données de parole en fonction de l'énergie des données de parole.

22. Sous-système selon la revendication 20, dans lequel le processeur (98) reçoit également des données non de parole pour émission et fournit les données non de parole à un débit qui est fonction du signal de commande de débit.

23. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication 7, dans lequel l'émetteur-récepteur est du type à étalement de spectre.

24. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication (23) comprenant en outre :

un démodulateur à étalement de spectre (96) disposé entre le récepteur (94) et le vocodeur à débit variable (100) pour démoduler le signal reçu selon un format de démodulation à étalement de spectre ; et
un processeur (98) disposé entre le démodulateur à étalement de spectre (96) et le vocodeur à débit variable (100) pour recevoir le signal démodulé et fournir séparément les données de message et l'ordre de commande de débit.

25. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable à étalement de spectre selon la revendication 24, dans lequel le processeur (98) est en outre apte à recevoir des données non de parole pour émission.

26. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable à étalement de spectre selon la revendication 23, comprenant en outre un modulateur (108) disposé entre le vocodeur à débit variable (100) et l'émetteur (110) pour moduler les données de parole codées.

27. Emetteur-récepteur à débit variable selon la revendication 24, comprenant en outre un modulateur (108) disposé entre le vocodeur à débit variable (100) et l'émetteur (110) pour moduler les données de parole codées.

28. Appareil pour contrôler la capacité en utilisateurs d'une station de base à étalement de spectre, cet appareil comprenant :

un élément de calcul d'énergie (66) qui détermine l'utilisation de la station de base à partir de l'énergie des signaux reçus ;
un comparateur (68) qui compare l'utilisation mesurée à une valeur prédéterminée et fournit sélectivement un signal de commande de débit en fonction desdites comparaisons, le signal de commande de débit commandant une réduction des débits de données quand l'utilisation mesurée est supérieure à la valeur prédéterminée ; et
un émetteur-récepteur (76) qui émet le signal de commande de débit selon un format de modulation à étalement de spectre.

29. Appareil selon la revendication 28, comprenant en outre un processeur (122) qui reçoit des données de message pour émission vers les utilisateurs éloignés (4) et le signal de commande de débit et qui combine les données de message au signal de commande de débit pour fournir un paquet de données composite.

30. Appareil selon la revendication 29, comprenant en outre un modulateur à étalement de spectre (124) disposé entre le processeur (122) et l'émetteur-récepteur (128), le modulateur (124) étant apte à moduler le paquet de données composite selon le format de modulation à étalement de spectre.

31. Station de base dans un système de communication à étalement de spectre dans lequel la station de base communique des messages sur une liaison directe à une pluralité d'utilisateurs éloignés (4), comprenant un appareil pour commander le débit de données des communications de message, comprenant :

un élément de calcul d'énergie (132) qui détermine en fonction de l'énergie du signal d'émission la valeur d'utilisation de la liaison directe ;
un circuit logique de commande de débit (134) qui reçoit la valeur d'utilisation, qui compare la valeur d'utilisation à au moins une valeur de seuil prédéterminée et qui fournit de façon conditionnelle un signal de commande

de débit en fonction desdites comparaisons ; et
au moins une source de données à débit variable pour émettre des données à un débit fonction du signal de
commande de débit selon un format de modulation à étalement de spectre.

5 **32.** Appareil selon la revendication 31, dans lequel ladite au moins une source de données à débit variable comprend
au moins un vocodeur à débit variable (120) qui code des données de parole à des débits variables.

10 **33.** Procédé d'optimisation de l'utilisation d'un système de communication à étalement de spectre et à accès multiples,
comprenant les étapes suivantes :

15 mesurer l'énergie reçue pour déterminer l'utilisation du système de communication ;
 comparer l'utilisation déterminée à au moins un seuil prédéterminé ;
 régler les débits de données de communication dans le système de communication en fonction desdites
 comparaisons ; et
20 émettre les communications des débits réglés selon un format de modulation à étalement de spectre.

25 **34.** Procédé selon la revendication 33, dans lequel l'étape de comparaison de l'utilisation déterminée à au moins un
seuil prédéterminé comprend la comparaison de ladite utilisation à un seuil d'utilisation haut prédéterminé, et
l'étape de réglage des données de débit de communication dans le système de communication comprend une
réduction du débit de données de communication quand l'utilisation dépasse le seuil d'utilisation haut.

30 **35.** Procédé selon la revendication 33, dans lequel l'étape de comparaison de l'utilisation déterminée à au moins un
seuil prédéterminé comprend la comparaison de ladite utilisation à un seuil d'utilisation bas prédéterminé, et l'étape
de réglage des données de débit de communication dans le système de communication comprend une augmen-
tation du débit de données de communication quand l'utilisation passe sous le seuil d'utilisation bas.

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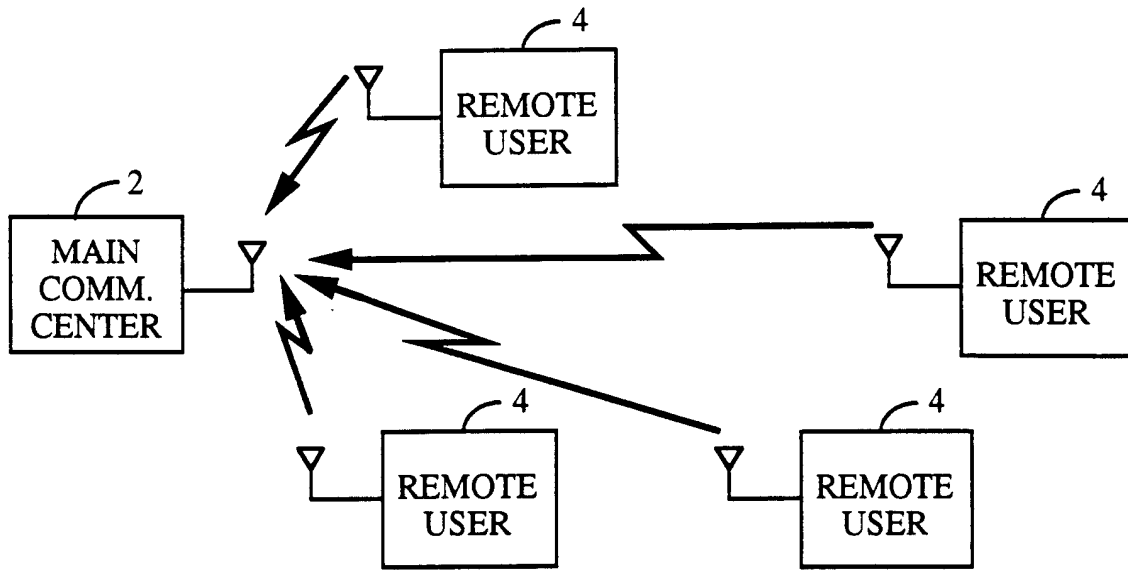


FIG. 1

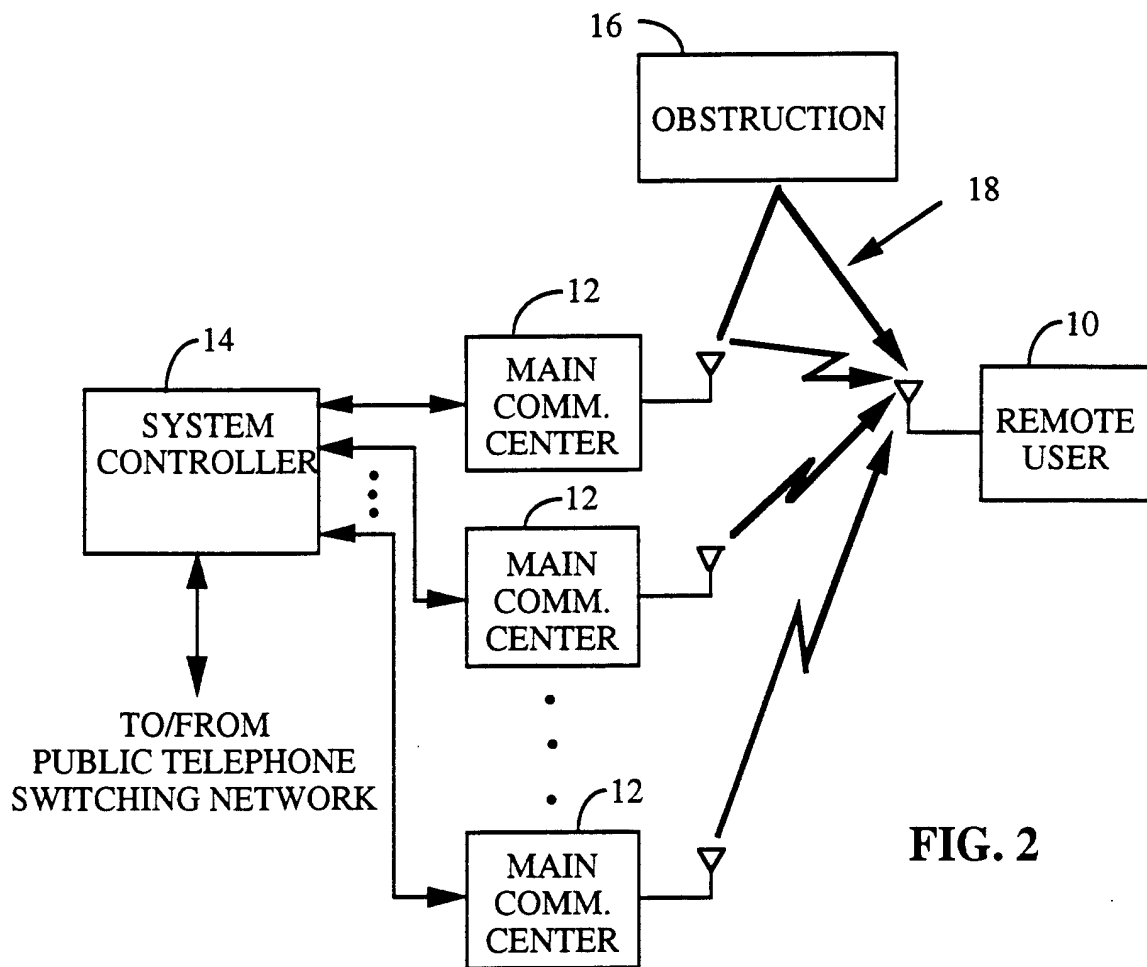


FIG. 2

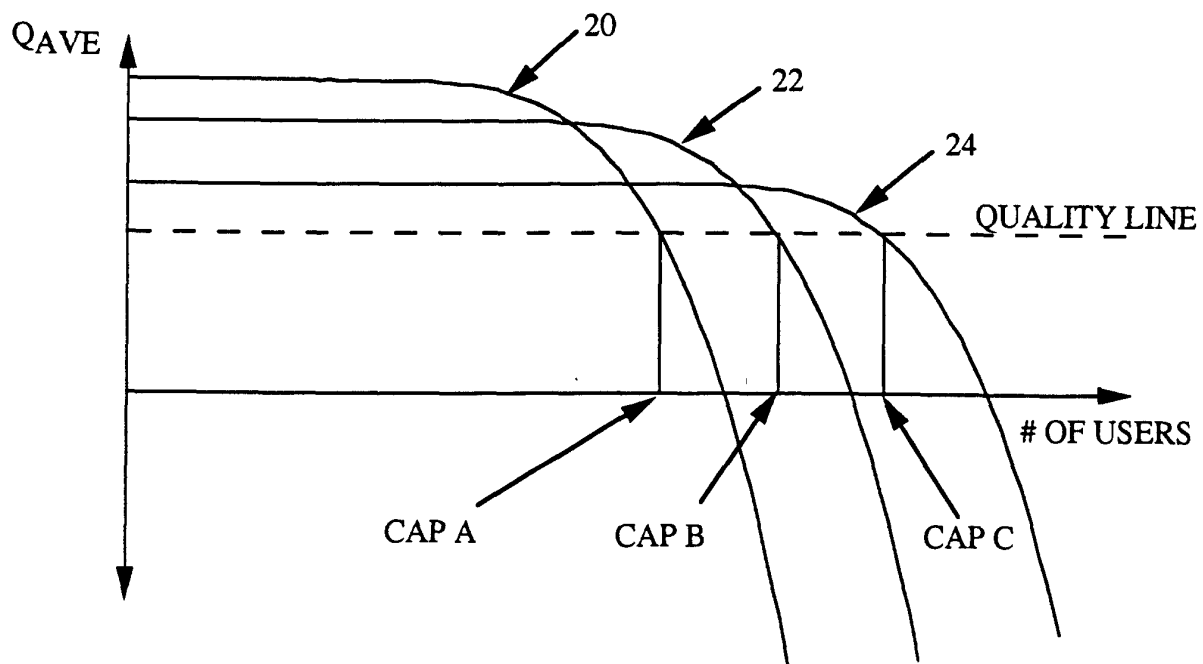
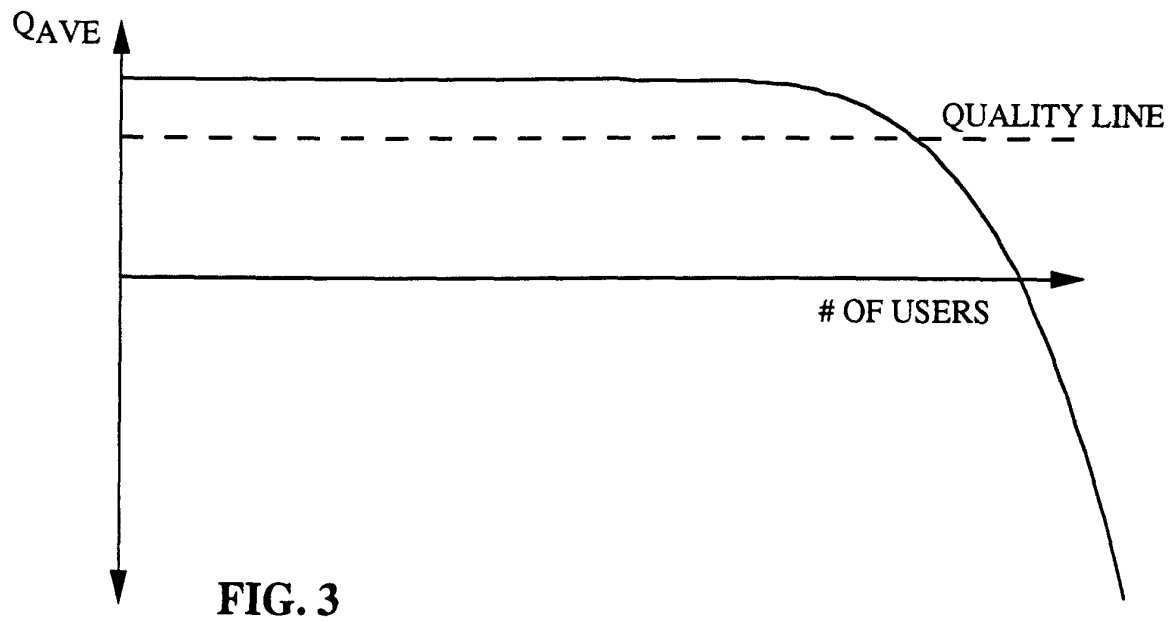


FIG. 4

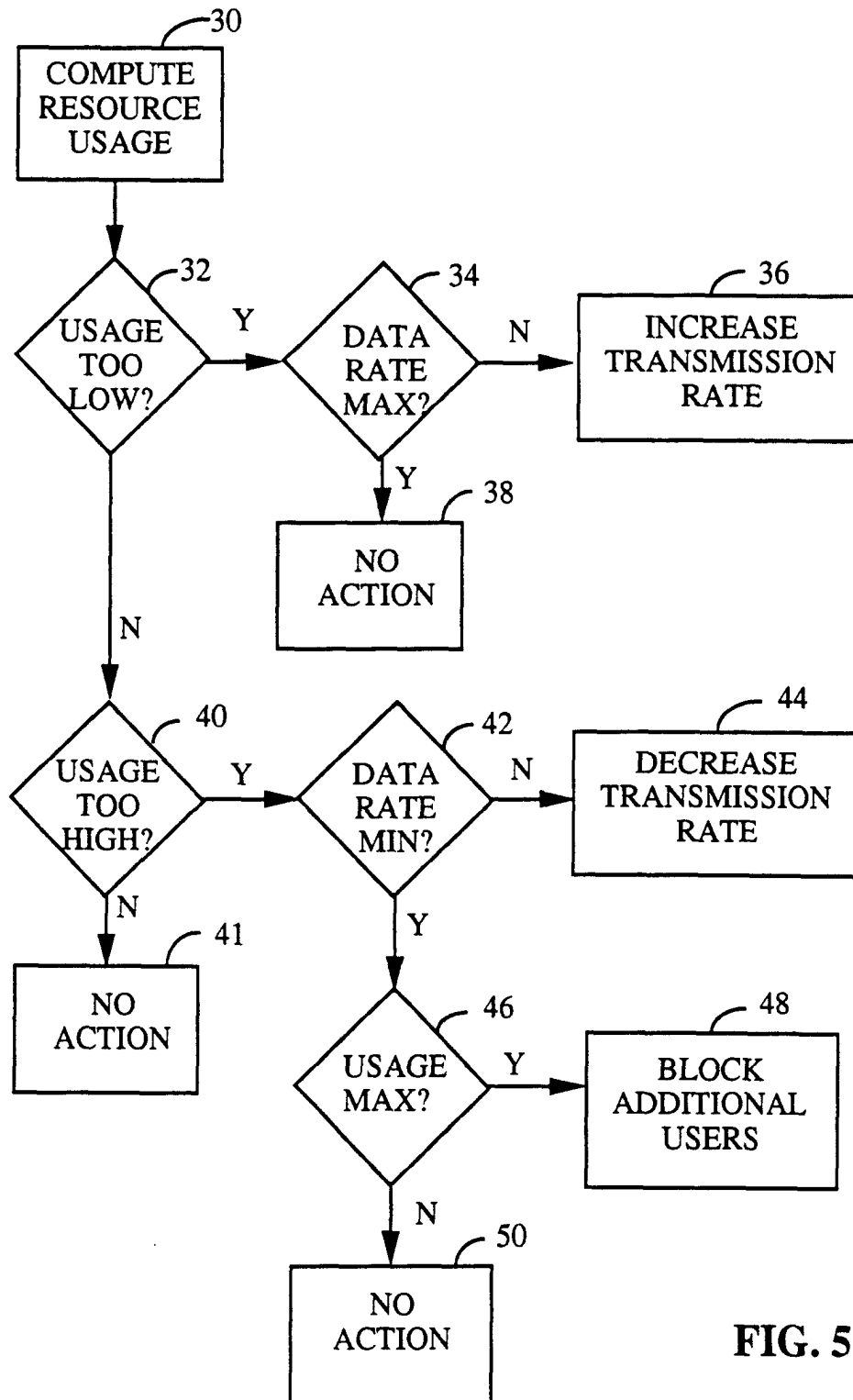


FIG. 5

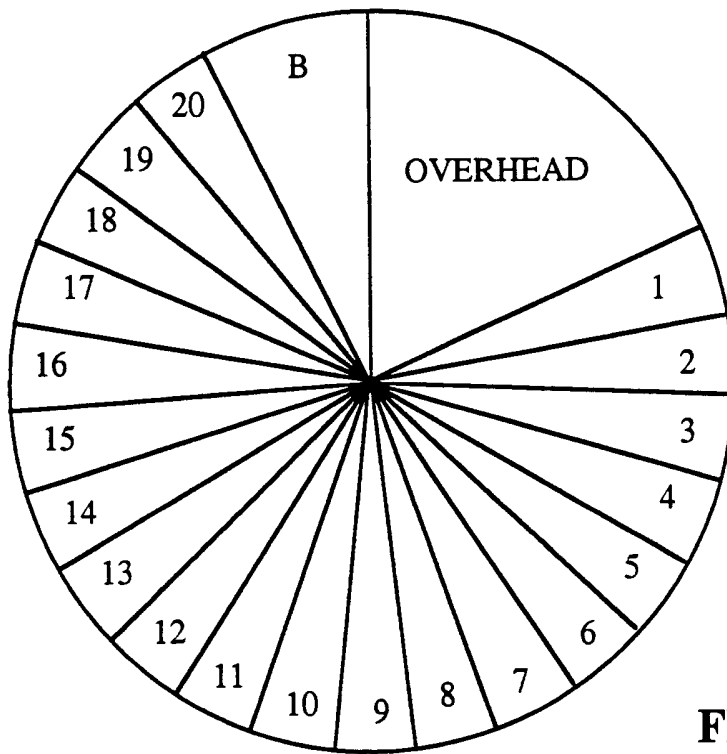


FIG. 6

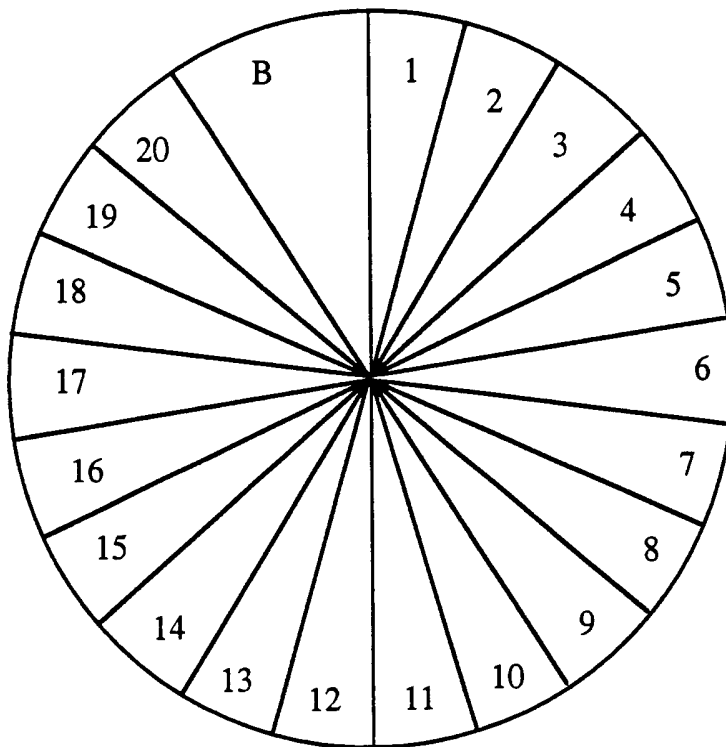


FIG. 7

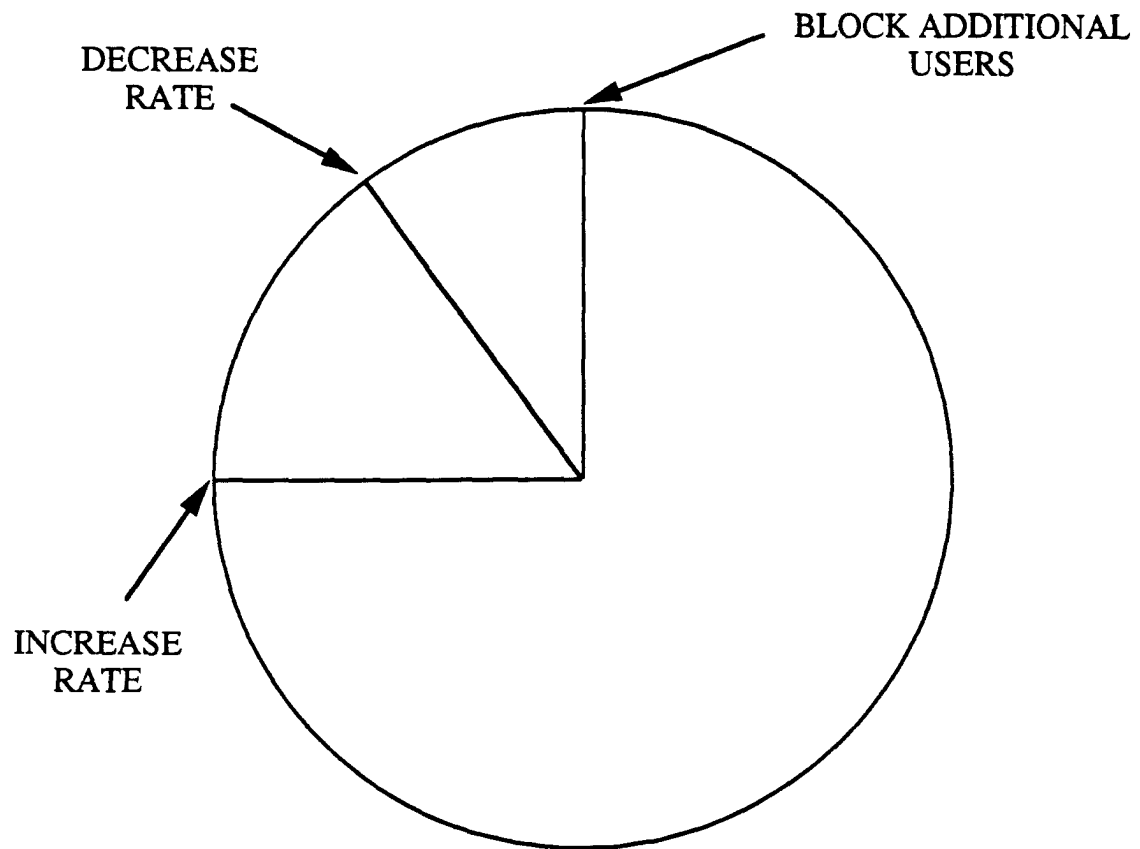


FIG. 8

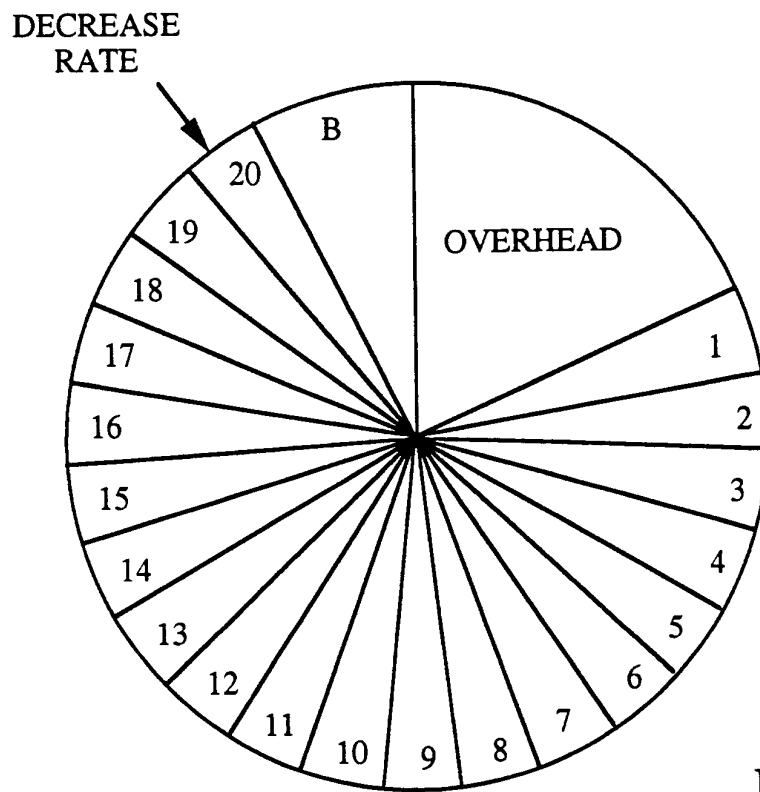


FIG. 9

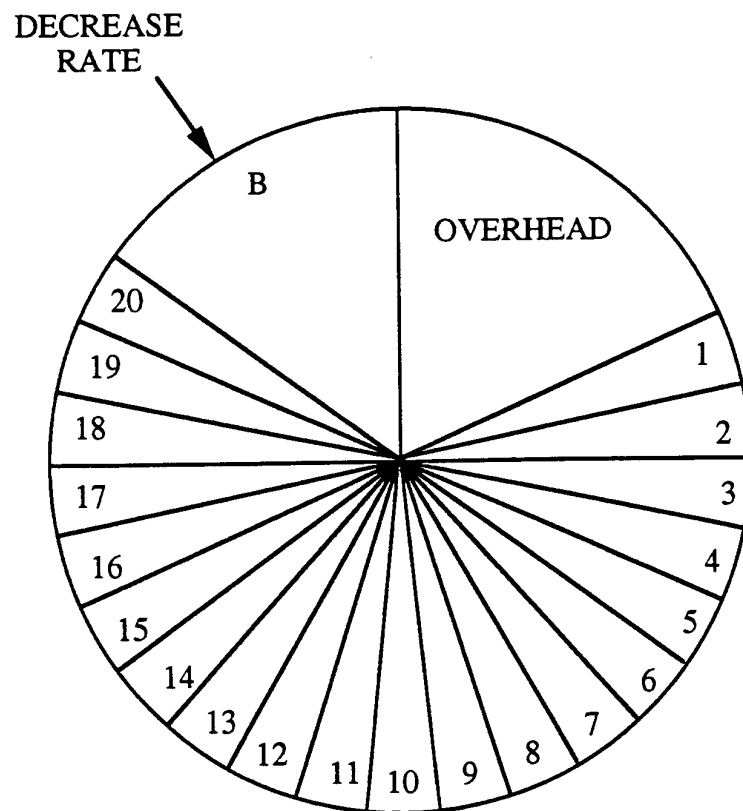


FIG. 10

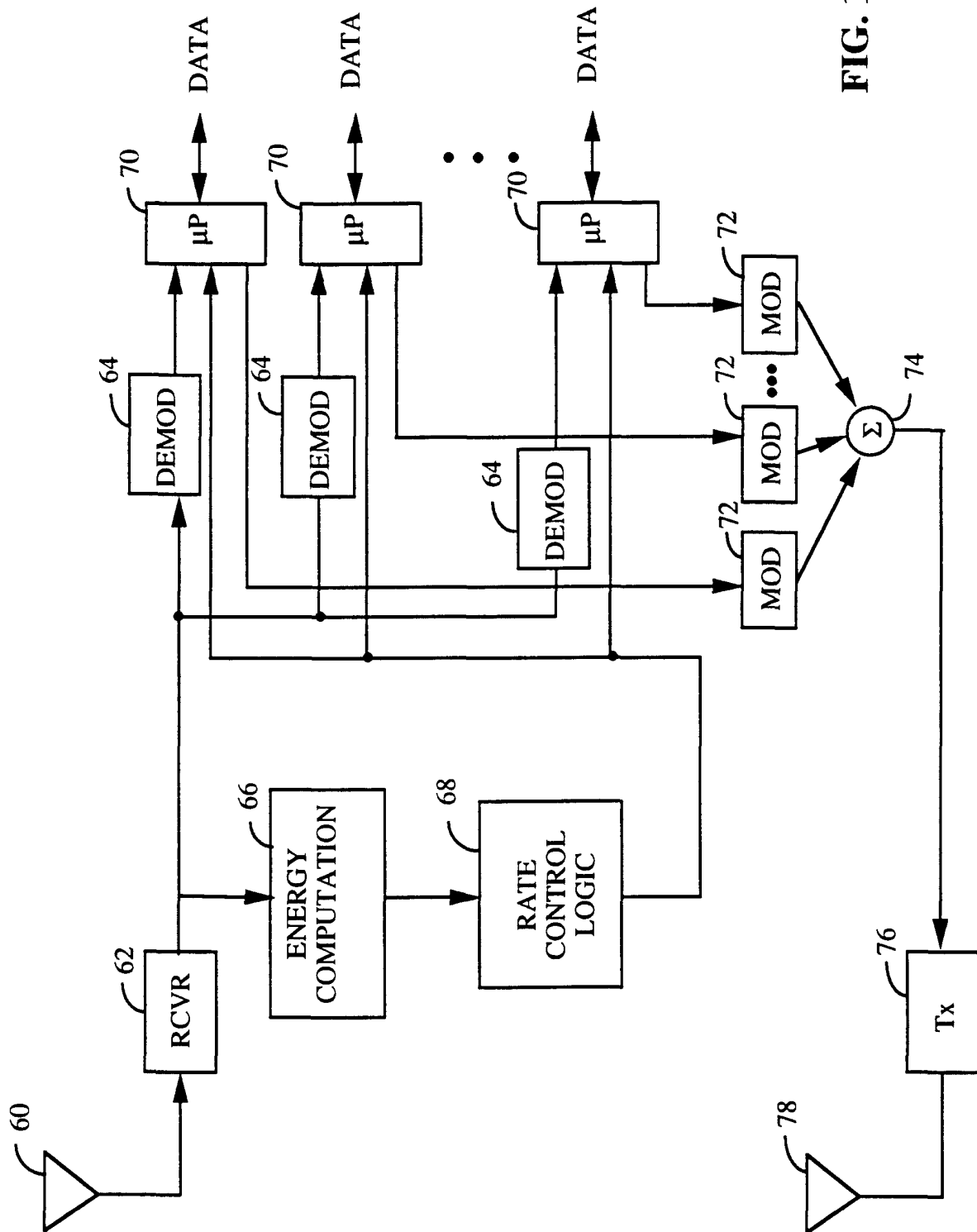


FIG. 11

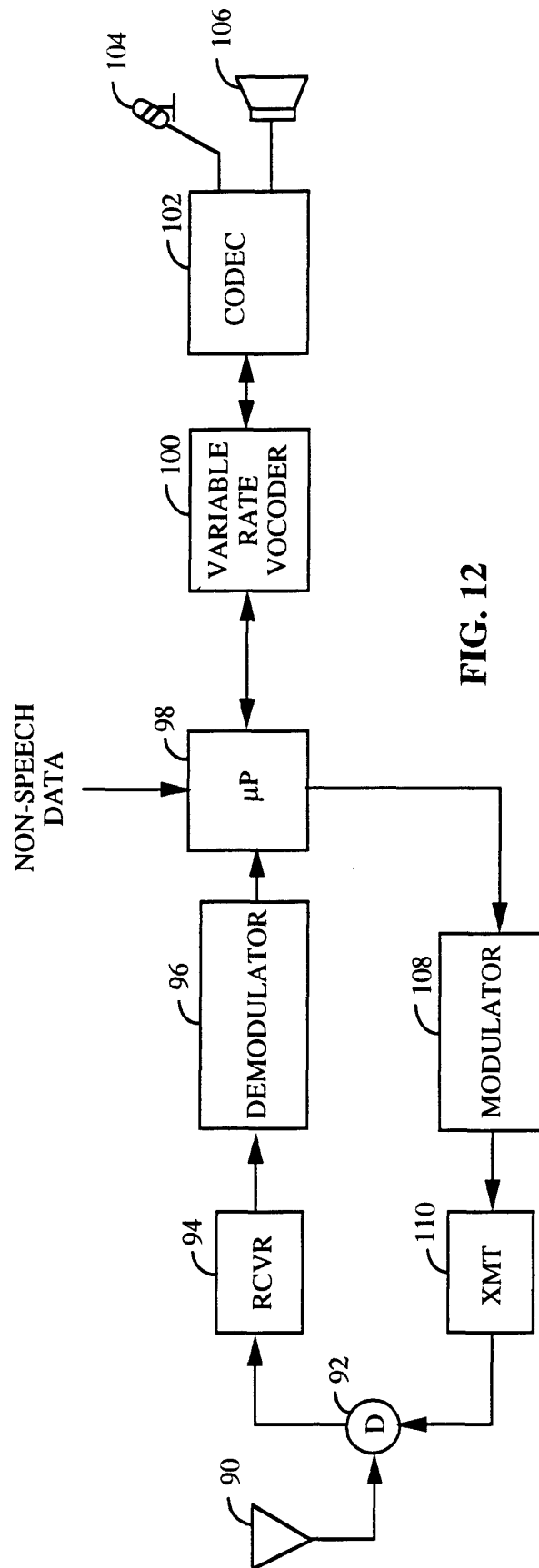


FIG. 12

