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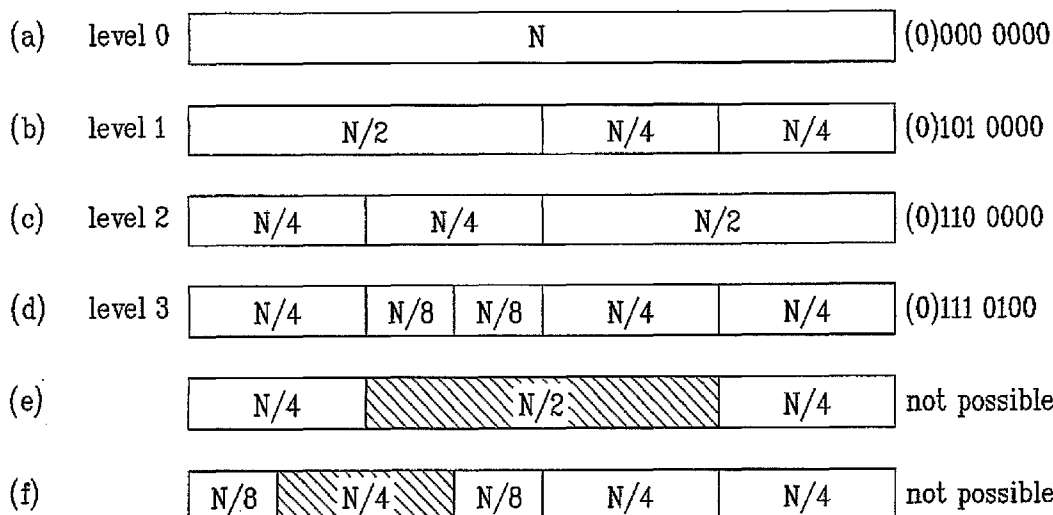
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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD OF ENCODING AND DECODING AUDIO SIGNAL



(57) Abstract: In one embodiment, a channel in a frame of the audio signal is subdivided into a plurality of blocks according to a subdivision hierarchy. The subdivision hierarchy has more than one level, and each level is associated with a different block length. At least two of the blocks have different lengths. First subdivision information indicating whether the channel has been subdivided is generated, and second subdivision information is generated if the subdividing has been performed. The second subdivision information indicates the subdivision of the channel into the blocks.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

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According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC⁸: G10L H04B H04N H04S

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPI EPODOC IEEE INSPEC

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 20030033569 A1 (Klein Middelink et al.) 13 February 2003 (13.02.2003) <i>Figs 1 and 2 with description, paragraph 0020</i>	1-13, 21-29

X	WO 2000/045389 A1 (Dolby Laboratories) 3 August 2000 (03.08.2000) <i>page 14, line 5 - page 22, line 9</i>	1-13, 21-29

X	EP 1359755 A1 (Philips Electronics) 5 November 2003 (05.11.2003) <i>paragraphs 0028 - 0029</i>	1, 21-29

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP A 1359755		none	
US A 20030033569		none	