

[54] **INTERNET BASED DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEM FOR COMMUNICATING BETWEEN SERVER AND CLIENTS WHEREIN CLIENTS COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER OR WITH TEACHER USING DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES VIA COMMON USER INTERFACE**

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[52] U.S. Cl. **709/204; 709/205; 709/203**

[58] **Field of Search** 395/650, 330, 395/676, 335; 709/204, 205, 206, 201, 203, 217, 58; 370/260; 707/10

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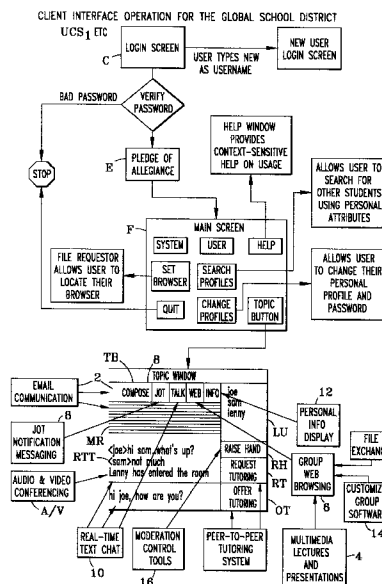
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A novel user-friendly method of and system for integrating the use of a plurality of different communication techniques for over-the-Internet interfacing between a central server storing a plurality of different information topics and user identification information and a plurality of independent user computer stations which have selected common information topics and are widely geographically separated, for such purposes as information and dialog networking of schools and other groups with common topic interests, and enabling real-time intercommunication amongst such users and with the server, and including growing the information on the selected topics through Internet feedback to the server of user dialog and supplemental information relating thereto; the method creating a virtual common room atmosphere for all the users (such as the same virtual classroom) wherein, irrespective of the diverse geographical locations and actual distances of the varied user stations from one another and from the central server, real-time interactions are enabled amongst all simulating as if the users were all actually in the same room at the same time and participating together.

29 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



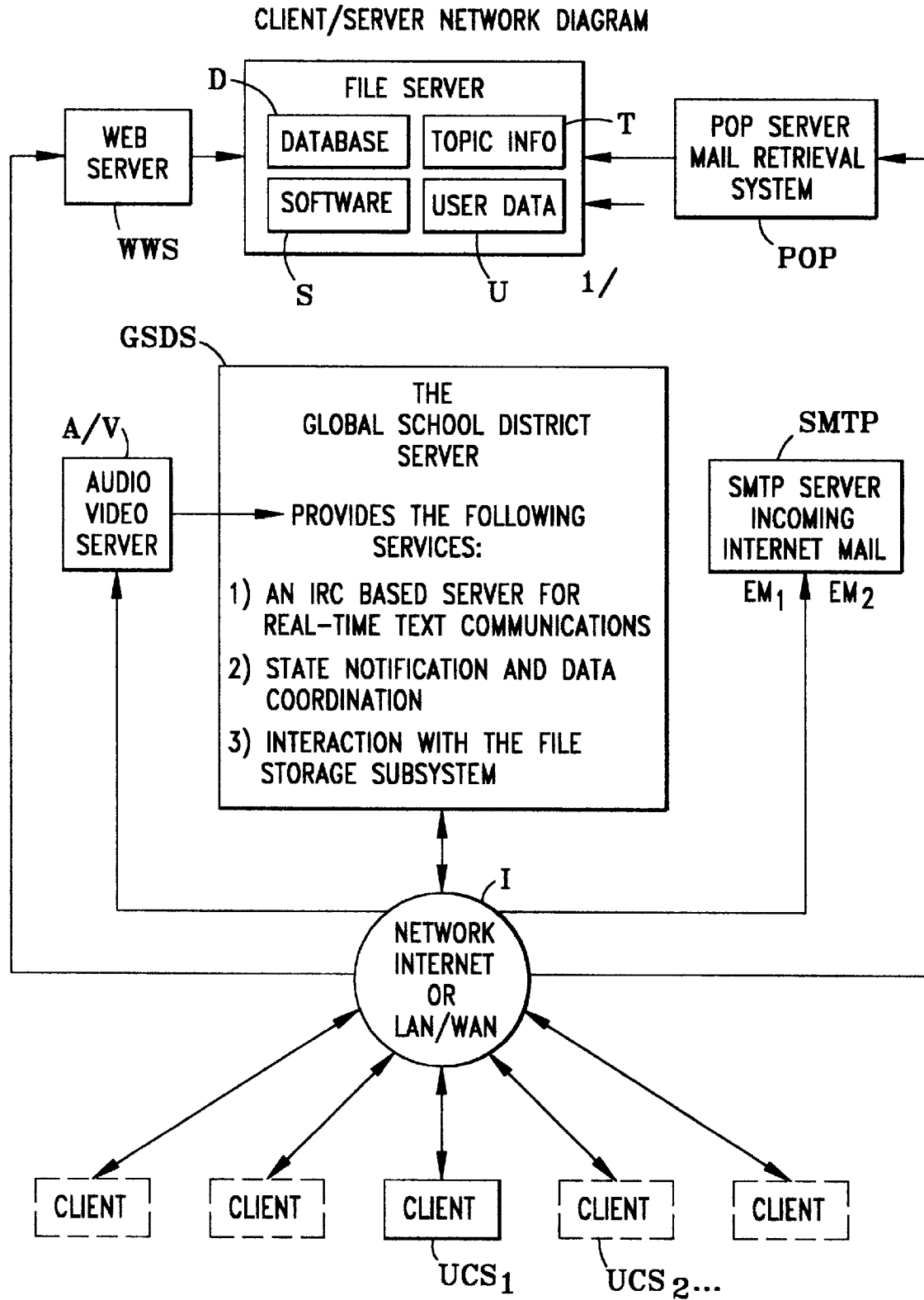


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

CLIENT INTERFACE OPERATION FOR THE GLOBAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

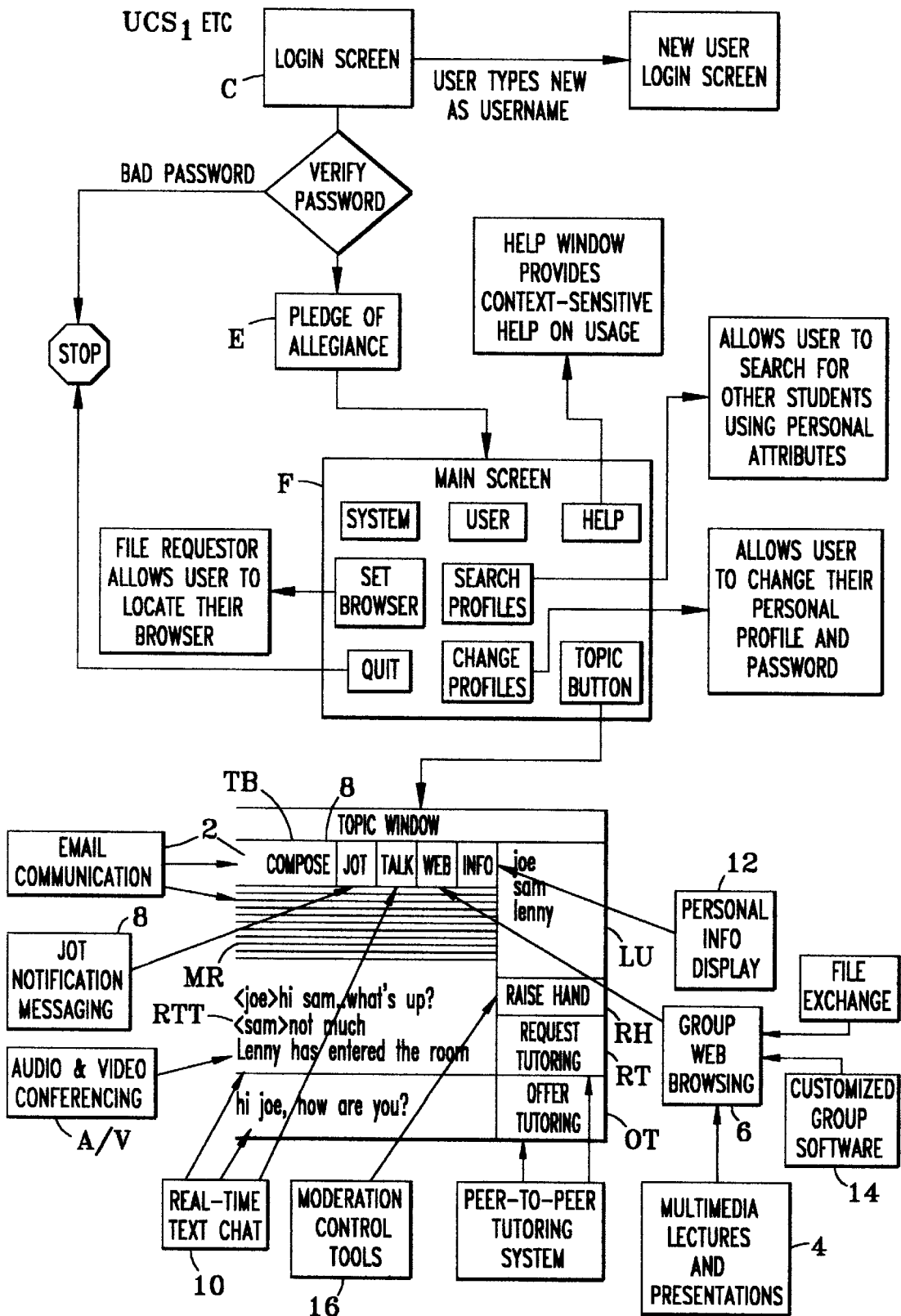


FIG. 3A

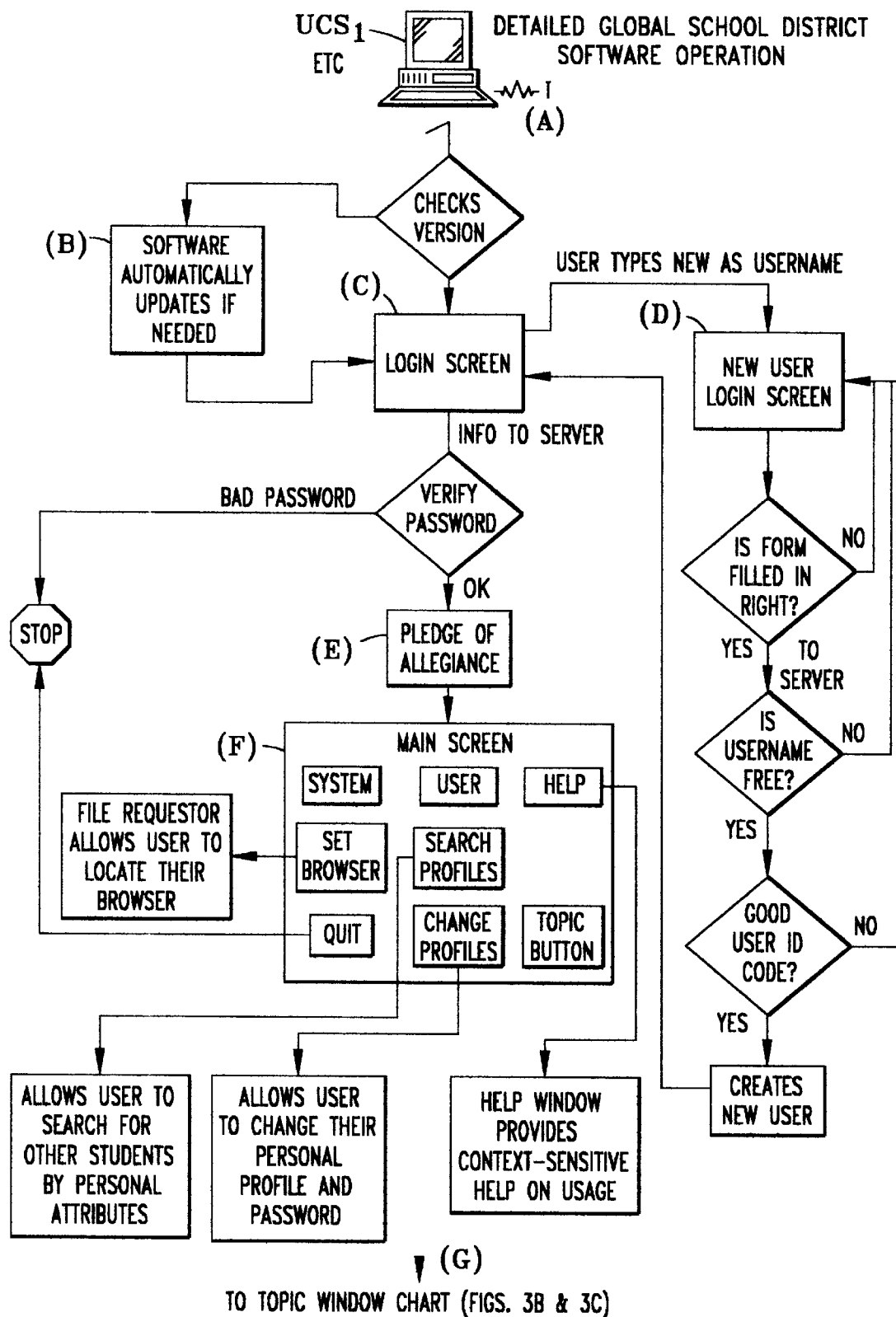
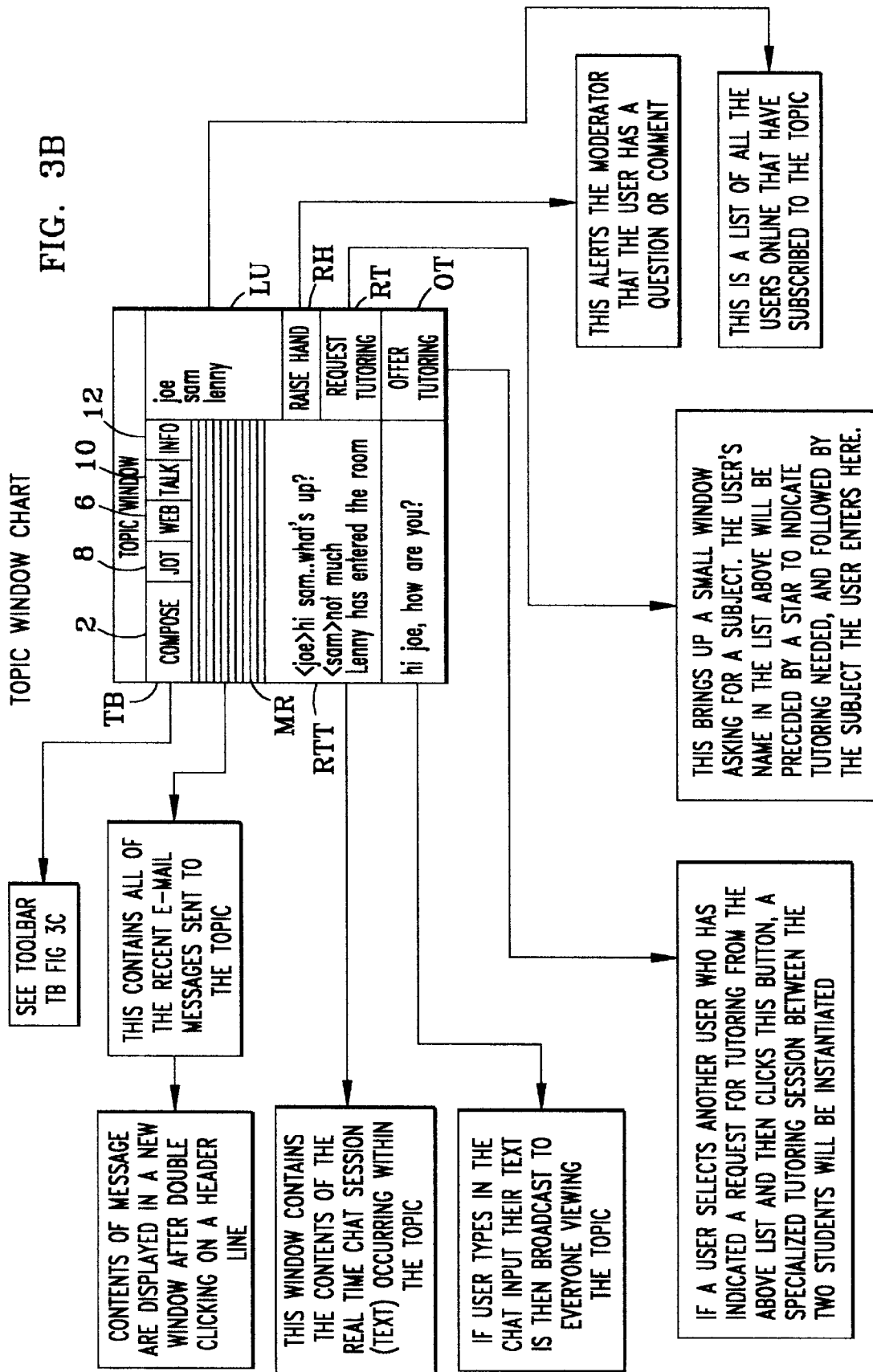


FIG. 3B



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