

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
23 February 2006 (23.02.2006)

PCT

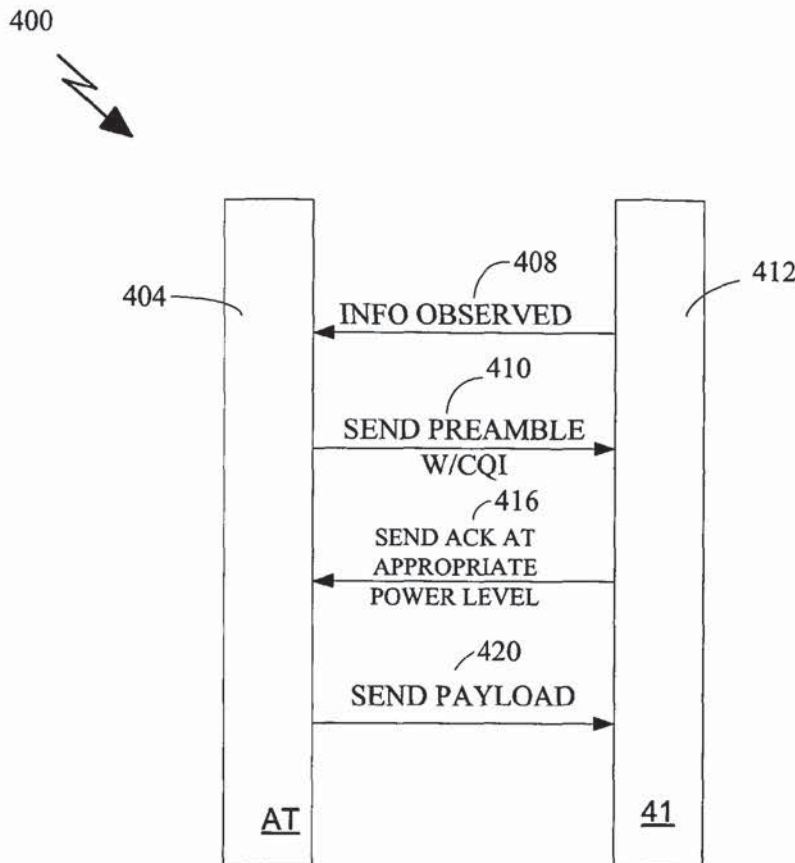
(10) International Publication Number
WO 2006/019710 A1

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **H04Q 7/38**
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US2005/024614
- (22) International Filing Date: 11 July 2005 (11.07.2005)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
 - 60/590,113 21 July 2004 (21.07.2004) US
 - 11/020,457 22 December 2004 (22.12.2004) US
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- (81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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(54) Title: EFFICIENT SIGNALING OVER ACCESS CHANNEL

WO 2006/019710 A1



(57) Abstract: An apparatus and method for transmitting an indicator of channel quality while minimizing the use of a broadcast channel is described. A metric of forward link geometry of observed transmission signals is determined. An indicator of channel quality value is determined as a function of the observed transmission signals. An access sequence is selected, randomly, from one group of a plurality of groups of access sequences, wherein each of the plurality of groups of access sequences correspond to different ranges of channel quality values.

APPIE 1003

**Declarations under Rule 4.17:**

— as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR,

GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG)

- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for all designations
- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for all designations

Published:

- with international search report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

EFFICIENT SIGNALING OVER ACCESS CHANNEL

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

- [0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/590,113, filed July 21, 2004, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

Field

- [0002] The invention relates generally to wireless communications, and more specifically to data transmission in a multiple access wireless communication system.

Background

- [0003] An access channel is used on the reverse link by an access terminal for initial contact with an access point. The access terminal may initiate an access attempt in order to request dedicated channels, to register, or to perform a handoff, etc. Before initiating an access attempt, the access terminal receives information from the downlink channel in order to determine the strongest signal strength from nearby access points and acquire downlink timing. The access terminal is then able to decode the information transmitted by the given access point on a broadcast channel regarding choice of parameters governing the access terminal's access attempt.
- [0004] In some wireless communication systems, an access channel refers both to a probe and message being rendered. In other wireless communication systems, the access channel refers to the probe only. Once the probe is acknowledged, a message governing the access terminal's access attempt is transmitted.
- [0005] In an orthogonal frequency division multiple access (OFDMA) system, an access terminal typically separates the access transmission to be transmitted on the access channel into parts, a preamble transmission and a payload transmission. To prevent intra-cell interference due to lack of fine timing on the reverse link during the access preamble transmission, a CDM-based preamble transmission may be time-division-multiplexed with the rest of the transmissions (i.e., traffic, control, and access payload). To access the system, the access terminal then randomly selects one PN

sequence out of a group of PN sequences and sends it as its preamble during the access slot.

[0006] The access point searches for any preambles (i.e., all possible PN sequences) that may have been transmitted during the access slot. Access preamble transmission performance is measured in terms of collision probability, misdetection probability and false alarm probability. Collision probability refers to the probability that a particular pseudo-random (PN) sequence is chosen by more than one access terminal as its preamble in the same access slot. This probability is inversely proportional to the number of preamble sequences available. Misdetection probability refers to the probability that a transmitted PN sequence is not detected by the base station. False alarm probability refers to the probability that an access point erroneously declared that a preamble has been transmitted while no preamble is actually transmitted. This probability increases with the number of preambles available.

[0007] The access point then transmits an acknowledgment for each of the preambles detected. The acknowledgement message may include a PN sequence detected, timing offset correction, and index of the channel for access payload transmission. Access terminal terminals whose PN sequence is acknowledged can then transmit the respective access payload using the assigned resource.

[0008] Because the access point has no prior knowledge of where the access terminal is in the system (i.e. what its power requirements, buffer level, or quality of service may be), the acknowledgement message is broadcasted at a power level high enough such that all access terminals in the given cell can decode the message. The broadcast acknowledgement is inefficient as it requires a disproportionate amount of transmit power and/or frequency bandwidth to close the link. Thus, there is a need to more efficiently send an acknowledgment message to access terminals in a given cell.

SUMMARY

[0009] Embodiments of the invention minimize use of a broadcast acknowledgement channel during its preamble transmission. Embodiments of the invention further addresses how information regarding forward link channel quality can be efficiently signaled over the access channel during access preamble transmission.

In one embodiment, an apparatus and method for transmitting an indicator of channel quality minimizing the use of a broadcast channel is described. A metric of

forward link geometry of observed transmission signals is determined. An indicator of channel quality value is determined as a function of the observed transmission signals. An access sequence is selected, randomly, from one group of a plurality of groups of access sequences, wherein each of the plurality of groups of access sequences correspond to different ranges of channel quality values.

[0010] The metric of forward link geometry may be determined as a function of observed pilot signals, noise, and/or traffic on data channels. The quantity of access sequences in the plurality of groups access sequences are distributed non-uniformly. In an embodiment, the access sequences are distributed to reflect the distribution of access terminals about the access point. In another embodiment, the access sequences are distributed in proportion to the number of access terminals that need a given amount of power needed to send an indicator of acknowledgment to the access terminal.

[0011] In another embodiment, a method of partitioning a plurality of access sequences, is described. A probability distribution of a plurality of access terminals about an access point is determined. The probability distribution is determined as a function of a plurality of access terminals having CQI values within a predetermined ranges. Groups of access sequences are assigned in proportion to the probability distribution. Access sequences can be reassigned as a function of a change in distribution of access terminals about the access point.

[0012] In yet another embodiment, an apparatus and method of transmitting an acknowledgement of a detected access sequence is described. An access sequence is received. The access sequence can be looked-up in a look-up table, stored in memory, to determine at least one attribute of the given access terminal (as a function of the access sequence). The attribute can be information such as a channel quality indicator, a buffer level and a quality of service indicator. Information is then transmitted to the access terminal, where the information is commensurate and consistent with the attribute. Information transmitted may include an indicator of acknowledgment. The indicator of acknowledgment may be transmitted over a shared signalling channel (SSCH).

[0013] Various aspects and embodiments of the invention are described in further detail below.

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