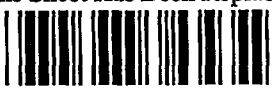
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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The mode data of a block to be coded is predicted from the mode data of peripheral blocks already coded, and coded using a code word table switched according to a hitting ratio of prediction. In the code word table, the code word length is set shorter for coding modes with high hitting ratio.