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(54) Title: AUDIO QUANTIZER AND AUDIO DEQUANTIZER AND RELATED METHODS

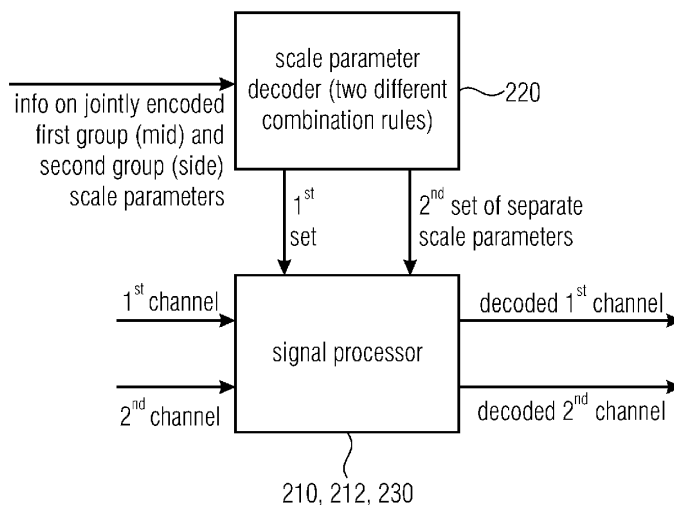


Fig. 8a
(DECODER)

(57) Abstract: An audio quantizer for quantizing a plurality of audio information items, comprises: a first stage vector quantizer (141, 143) for quantizing the plurality of audio information items to determine a first stage vector quantization result and a plurality of intermediate quantized items corresponding to the first stage vector quantization result; a residual item determiner (142) for calculating a plurality of residual items from the plurality of intermediate quantized items and the plurality of audio information items; and a second stage vector quantizer (145) for quantizing the plurality of residual items to obtain a second stage vector quantization result, wherein the first stage vector quantization result and the second stage vector quantization result are a quantized representation of the plurality of audio information items.

[Continued on next page]

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