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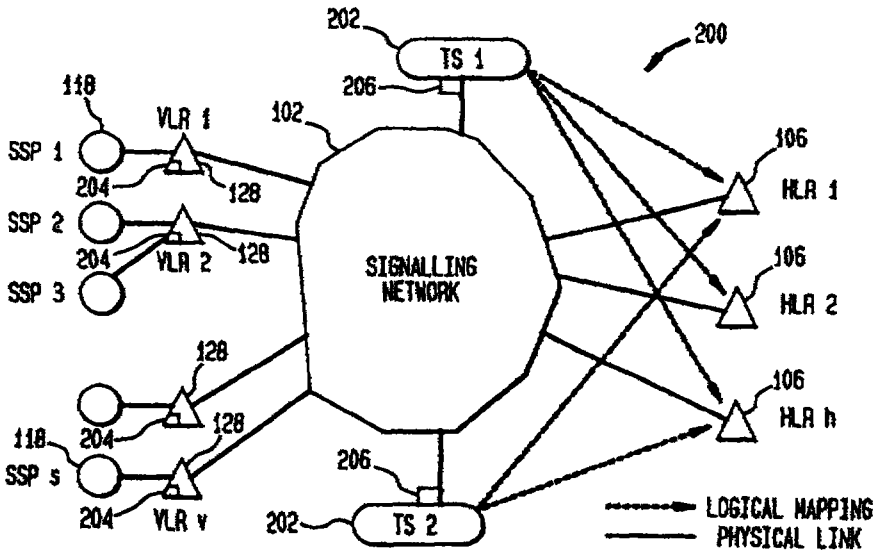
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS SUPPORTING NON-GEOGRAPHIC TELEPHONE NUMBERS



(57) Abstract

A communications network (200) may include a translation server (202) containing a NGPN-to-HLR mapping table. Translation servers (TS) may be configured in several ways. The server or several TSs may be on the network. When a number of translation servers are used, a VLR (128) or other network entity receiving an NGPN determines which translation server contains the mapping for that NGPN. One way to do this is when a subscriber roams out of his "home" region, his NGPN is presented to the "foreign" service provider's TS. The foreing TS broadcasts a query to all other TSs in the network either simultaneously or in stages. Another way is that a VLR receiving a NGPN performs a hash function of the NGPN. The hash function indentifies a translation server. The VLR may then query the translation server and obtain the NGPN-to-HLR mapping. Where a hash function is used, an extendable hash function to accomodate the addition of new TSs without changing the VLR operating systems.