IMAGE ENCODING METHOD, IMAGE ENCODING DEVICE, IMAGE DECODING METHOD, IMAGE DECODING DEVICE, AND IMAGE ENCODING/DECODING DEVICE

[ABSTRACT]

An image coding method includes: determining a maximum number of merging candidates (S601); deriving first merging candidates based on blocks spatially or temporally neighboring a current block (S602); determining whether or not a total number of the first merging candidates is smaller than the maximum number (S604); deriving, by making a combination out of the derived first merging candidates, a second merging candidate for bi-directional prediction when it is determined that the total number of the first merging candidates is smaller than the maximum number (S605); selecting a merging candidate to be used for the coding of the current block from the first merging candidates and the second merging candidate (S606); and coding, using the determined maximum number, an index for identifying the selected merging candidate, and attaching the coded index to the bitstream (S607).

Figure 30