ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENCODING A VIDEO SIGNAL HAVING MULTI-LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES

An audio/video system for encoding and decoding a video signal and a plurality of corresponding audio signals. The system includes an encoder means for receiving an input video signal, a first audio signal, and a plurality of second audio signals which correspond to the input video signal. The encoder means combines the input video signal and the plurality of second audio signals to produce an encoded video signal but leaves the first audio signal substantially unchanged and then outputs the first audio signal and the encoded video signal. An audio/video signal communication means is connected to the encoder. The audio/video signal communication means accepts the encoded video signal and the first audio signal and transmits them to a decoder. The decoder means separates the plurality of second audio signals from the encoded video signal leaving an unencoded video signal. The decoder then combines each of the plurality of second audio signals with a reproduction of the first audio signal so as to form a plurality of combined audio signals. The decoder then outputs the unencoded video signal and the plurality of combined audio signals. A signal delivery means which is coupled to the decoder includes a selection means which allows at least one of the plurality of the combined audio signals to be played with the unencoded video signal in a manner determined by the user.

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