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Inventor(s)

Chandra; Arty et al.

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING AND UTILIZING A NON-CONTENTION BASED CHANNEL IN A WIRELESS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Abstract

In a wireless communication system comprising at least one evolved Node-B (eNB) and a plurality of wireless transmit/receive units (WTRUs), a non-contention based (NCB) channel is established, maintained, and utilized. The NCB channel is allocated for use by one or more WTRUs in the system for utilization in a variety of functions, and the allocation is communicated to the WTRUs. The wireless communication system analyzes the allocation of the NCB channel as required, and the NCB channel is reallocated as required.

Inventors: Chandra; Arty (Roslyn, NY), Wang; Jin (Princeton, NJ), Chen; John S. (Ann Arbor Twp., MI), Terry; Stephen E. (Northport, NY), Zhang; Guodong (Woodbury, NY)

Applicant: InterDigital Technology Holdings, Inc. (Wilmington, DE)

Family ID: 38279207

Assignee: InterDigital Technology Corporation (Wilmington, DE)

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Background/Summary

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS [0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 18/531,397, filed Dec. 6, 2023, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 17/246,785, filed May 3, 2021, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 11,917,623 on Feb. 27, 2024, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/274,421, filed Feb. 13, 2019, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 11,160,058 on Oct. 26, 2021, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/676,769, filed Aug. 14, 2017, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 10,271,318, on Apr. 23, 2019, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/828,261, filed Aug. 17, 2015, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 9,781,708 on Oct. 3, 2017, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/055,350, filed Oct. 16, 2013, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 9,203,580 on Dec. 1, 2015, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/669,269, filed Jan. 31, 2007, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 8,619,747 on Dec. 31, 2013, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/886,164, filed Jan. 23, 2007 and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/763,791, filed Jan. 31, 2006, which are incorporated by reference herein as if fully set forth.

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to wireless communication systems. More particularly, the present invention relates to a method and apparatus for providing and utilizing a non-contention based channel in a wireless communication system.

BACKGROUND

[0003] The Long Term Evolution (LTE) of wideband code division multiple access (WCDMA) third generation (3G) cellular networks is directed to universal mobile telecommunication systems (UMTS) beyond the third generation partnership project (3GPP) Release 7. LTE may also be referred to as evolved UMTS terrestrial radio access (E-UTRA). One of the main technological challenges of such networks is efficient channel usage when there is a varied traffic mix in the

system. This may be particularly challenging when the various types of traffic utilize different transmission protocols, such as voice over internet protocol (VoIP), file transfer protocol (FTP), or hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP). For example, in any particular wireless communication system, there may be numerous VoIP users, FTP users, and HTTP users all transmitting simultaneously.

[0004] Additionally, the wireless transmit/receive units (WTRUs) in the system perform a variety of tasks and functions that require access to the transmission medium in order to communicate with a base station. For example, the WTRUs must perform functions such as timing advance, measurement reporting, requesting uplink (UL) physical resource allocation, providing schedule information for downlink (DL) allocation, keep-alive heartbeat, hybrid automatic repeat request (HARQ) feedback and/or Medium Access Control (MAC) or Radio Resource Control (RRC) layer signaling.

[0005] The WTRUs in a wireless communication system could utilize a Random Access Channel (RACH) or physical RACH (PRACH) in order to communicate with the base station to perform these functions. However, a RACH is a contention-based channel, and its use incurs delays that tend to affect quality of service (QOS) and may result in inefficient use of physical resources. A reliance on RACH for interactive applications between transmissions may also negatively impact system capacity.

[0006] Alternatively, the WTRU could utilize a UL shared channel to perform these functions. However, a UL shared channel resource request would first have to be transmitted on a RACH/PRACH, which would be an inefficient use of resources and would add delay to these functions due to the two step procedure.

[0007] In the context of LTE, it would be desirable to utilize an access protocol such as a non-contention based (NCB) channel, which may also be referred to as a “thin” or “dedicated” channel. Thin channels are generally contention-free, or low contention, control channels that are primarily used for access.

[0008] It would therefore be advantageous to provide a method and apparatus for providing and utilizing an NCB channel that would not be subject to the limitations of the current state of the art.

SUMMARY

[0009] The present invention is directed to the establishment, maintenance, and utilization of a non-contention based (NCB) channel in a wireless communication system comprising at least one Evolved Node-B (eNB) and a plurality of wireless transmit/receive units (WTRUs). Each NCB channel is dedicated and allocated for use by a particular WTRU in the system for utilization in a variety of functions, and the allocation is communicated to the WTRUs in the system by the eNB. The wireless communication system analyzes the allocation of each NCB channel as required, and each NCB channel is reallocated as required.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] A more detailed understanding of the invention may be had from the following description of a preferred embodiment, given by way of example and to be understood in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein:

[0011] FIG. 1 shows an exemplary wireless communication system configured in accordance with the present invention;

[0012] FIG. 2 is a functional block diagram of an eNB and a WTRU of the wireless communication system of FIG. 1;

[0013] FIG. 3 is a flow diagram of a method for establishing and maintaining a non-contention based (NCB) channel with a particular WTRU, in accordance with the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 4 is an exemplary time-frequency diagram depicting an NCB channel allocation to a plurality of WTRUs, in accordance with the present invention;

[0015] FIG. 5 is a flow diagram of a method for determining a timing advance using an NCB channel, in accordance with the present invention;

[0016] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram of a method for determining scheduling modifications using an NCB channel, in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] FIG. 7 is a flow diagram of a method of allocating resources using an NCB channel, in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention;

[0018] FIG. 8 is an exemplary time-frequency diagram depicting an allocation of resources, in accordance with the method of FIG. 6;

[0019] FIG. 9 is an exemplary block diagram depicting a frequency diverse NCB channel allocation in a system comprising a plurality of sub-channels in accordance with the present invention;

[0020] FIG. 10 is an exemplary time-frequency diagram depicting a time and frequency hopping NCB channel allocation, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention; and

[0021] FIG. 11 is an exemplary diagram depicting differing NCB channel requirements for a WTRU, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0022] When referred to hereafter, the terminology “wireless transmit/receive unit (WTRU)” includes but is not limited to a user equipment (UE), a mobile station (STA), a mesh point (MP), a fixed or mobile subscriber unit, a pager, a cellular telephone, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a computer, or any other type of user device capable of operating in a wireless environment. When referred to hereafter, the terminology “base station” includes but is not limited to a Node-B, a site controller, an access point (AP), or any other type of interfacing device capable of operating in a wireless environment.

[0023] In general, the present invention is directed to a method and apparatus for establishing, maintaining, and utilizing non-contention based (NCB) dedicated channels. The NCB channels, in a preferred embodiment of the present invention, are channels that are dedicated to a particular WTRU for use during a particular time and may be re-allocated depending on system need. The NCB channel utilization may aid in avoiding latency and inefficient use of physical resources associated with an UL contention based procedure, and may also be used in downlink or in ad-hoc networks.

[0024] FIG. 1 shows an exemplary wireless communication system **100** (also referred to hereinafter as “system”) configured in accordance with the present invention. The wireless communication system **100** includes a plurality of evolved Node-Bs (eNBs) **110** (designated as eNB.sub.1 and eNB.sub.2) and a plurality of WTRUs **120** (designated WTRU.sub.1, WTRU.sub.2, WTRU.sub.3, and WTRU.sub.4), in wireless communication with the eNBs **110**. The WTRUs **120** depicted in the wireless communication system **100** may comprise any combination of WTRUs, such as STAs, MPs, and the like. In a preferred embodiment, the eNBs **110** provide access to a network to the WTRUs **120** (WTRU.sub.1, WTRU.sub.2, WTRU.sub.3, and WTRU.sub.4) in communication with them. As shown in an exemplary configuration in FIG. 1, WTRU.sub.1, WTRU.sub.2, and WTRU.sub.3 are currently in communication with eNB.sub.1 while WTRU.sub.4 is in currently in communication with eNB.sub.2. However, any of the WTRUs **120** may be in communication with either of the eNBs **110**, apart from what is depicted in FIG. 1.

[0025] FIG. 2 is a functional block diagram of the eNB **110** and a WTRU **120** of the wireless communication system **100** of FIG. 1. As shown in FIG. 2, the eNB **110** and WTRU **120** are in wireless communication with one another, and are configured to utilize an NCB channel in the wireless communication system **100**. In one example, the WTRU **120** may be a mobile STA or an MP in communication with the eNB **110**, which provides access to a network for the WTRU **120**.

[0026] In addition to the components that may be found in a typical eNB, the eNB **110** includes a

processor **115**, a receiver **116**, a transmitter **117**, and an antenna **118**. The processor **115** is configured to establish, maintain and utilize an NCB channel in accordance with the present invention. The receiver **116** and the transmitter **117** are in communication with the processor **115**. The antenna **118** is in communication with both the receiver **116** and the transmitter **117** to facilitate the transmission and reception of wireless data.

[0027] Similarly, in addition to the components that may be found in a typical WTRU, the WTRU **120** includes a processor **125**, a receiver **126**, a transmitter **127**, and an antenna **128**. The processor **125** is configured to establish, maintain and utilize an NCB channel in accordance with the present invention. The receiver **126** and the transmitter **127** are in communication with the processor **125**. The antenna **128** is in communication with both the receiver **126** and the transmitter **127** to facilitate the transmission and reception of wireless data.

[0028] FIG. **3** is a flow diagram of a method **300** for establishing and maintaining an NCB channel with a particular WTRU, in accordance with the present invention. In step **310**, the NCB channel is established and allocated. The NCB channel may be configured by the eNB **110**. For example, a network operator may identify certain radio resource management (RRM) parameters that are used by the eNB **110** to determine the NCB channel configuration and when it is established and reconfigured.

[0029] In the establishment of the NCB channel, the duration and periodicity of the channel may be configured. In a preferred embodiment, the duration may be infinite. Additionally, the system or WTRU **120** may have the ability to terminate or reconfigure the allocated NCB channel. In the infinite case, signaling from either the eNB **110** or the WTRU **120** may terminate the NCB channel allocation.

[0030] The NCB channel may be allocated to a particular WTRU **120** for a given duration. The duration may be a subset of time for the WTRU **120** to utilize the NCB channel or the WTRU **120** may be assigned a periodic interval for usage of the NCB channel. It should also be noted that any combination of the above allocations may be utilized, and the durations and/or periodic operation may include the physical resources allocated being time multiplexed among a plurality of WTRUs **120**.

[0031] The wireless communication system **100** may utilize a number of characteristics in configuring the NCB channel. For example, the NCB channel may be configured to support functions such as timing advance, measurement reporting, UL physical resource requesting, providing information for DL resource scheduling, keep-alive heartbeat, hybrid automatic repeat request (HARQ) feedback and/or Medium Access Control (MAC) or Radio Resource Control (RRC) layer signaling, all of which are described herein following. Furthermore, the NCB channel may be configured to support a combination of functions. For example, a particular WTRU **120** performing a scheduling request may also be concurrently providing measurement reporting or concurrently providing a synchronization burst to perform timing advance. Accordingly, any combination of these functions may be performed in a common signaling procedure. Therefore, any number of functions may be performed concurrently on a configured NCB channel. In another embodiment, a periodic NCB channel may be configured following a predefined period during which no UL transmissions have been occurring.

[0032] Additionally, the service types such as Voice over IP (VoIP) or internet gaming, the Quality of Service (QoS) requirements for services currently active on the WTRU **120** may be utilized, as well as the activity rate of those services.

[0033] The configuration of the NCB channel may also include multiplexing it in the frequency domain, such as through frequency division multiplexing (FDM). The NCB channel may also be multiplexed in the code domain by using spreading codes, in the time domain, and in the space domain using spatial division multiplexing (SDMA) or other MIMO techniques. Furthermore, the NCB channel may be multiplexed by any combination of the above multiplexing techniques.

[0034] In this way, physical resources utilized by the NCB channel may be configured for use by

more than one WTRU 120 at various times without being contended for by those WTRUs 120 during any particular period of time. For example, the NCB channel may be allocated to WTRU.sub.1 for a particular periodicity and/or duration, and allocated to WTRU.sub.2 for another periodicity and/or duration. Accordingly, the NCB channel is typically dedicated to a particular WTRU 120 at a particular moment in time, but shared among a plurality of WTRUs 120 over various periods in time.

[0035] Still referring to FIG. 3, the NCB channel allocation is transmitted to the WTRUs 120 in the wireless communication system 100 by the eNB 110 (step 320) with which the WTRUs 120 are in communication. In the example depicted in FIG. 1, eNB.sub.1 transmits the NCB channel allocation to WTRU.sub.1, WTRU.sub.2, and WTRU.sub.3, while eNB.sub.2 transmits the NCB channel allocation to WTRU.sub.4. This transmission, or communication, may be included in the downlink (DL) common control channel signaling or a dedicated control channel signal mapped to a DL shared channel among the WTRUs 120.

[0036] Alternatively, the NCB channel may be allocated by the DL common control channel as other uplink (UL) shared channel allocations. Additionally, where the NCB channel is a control channel separate from the UL shared channel used for user data transmissions, a logical control channel mapped to the DL shared channel may be utilized.

[0037] FIG. 4 is an exemplary time-frequency diagram 400 depicting an allocation of NCB channels (designated 430, 440, and 450) to a plurality of WTRUs 120, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In particular, NCB channel 430 may be dedicated to WTRU.sub.1, NCB channel 440 may be dedicated to WTRU.sub.2, and NCB channel 450 may be dedicated to WTRU.sub.3. Accordingly, in the present example, WTRU.sub.1 accesses eNB.sub.1 on NCB channel 430, WTRU.sub.2 accesses eNB.sub.1 on NCB channel 440, and WTRU.sub.3 accesses eNB.sub.1 on NCB channel 450, whereby the WTRUs 120 do not need to contend with one another for access to the eNB 110.

[0038] As shown in FIG. 3, the allocation of the NCB channel is analyzed by the wireless communication system 100 (step 330) to ensure an optimal allocation. For example, the wireless communication system 100 may analyze the amount of time the currently allocated NCB channel has remained idle, or the QoS requirements for the various WTRUs 120 in the system 100. Alternatively, the system 100 may determine that the NCB channel should be reconfigured upon reception of channel allocation signaling whereby data capacity may need to be increased or decreased. If the system 100 determines that a reconfiguration or reallocation is required based on the analysis (step 340), then the system 100 may reconfigure the allocation of the NCB channel, and transmit the updated NCB channel allocation to the WTRUs 120 in the system (step 350).

[0039] FIG. 5 is a flow diagram of a method 500 for determining a timing advance using an NCB channel, in accordance with the present invention. In step 510, the WTRU 120 transmits a synchronization burst to the eNB 110 over the NCB channel allocated to the WTRU 120. This synchronization burst may be transmitted periodically or dynamically based on specific triggering events. Since timing advance is relative to signal propagation delay and a maximum WTRU speed is known, a periodicity requirement of timing advance bursts can be calculated and matched with the configured periodicity of the NCB channel. Preferably, the synchronization bursts are coordinated with the time intervals that the NCB channel exists for that particular WTRU 120.

[0040] The eNB 110 receives the synchronization burst from the WTRU 120 and performs timing estimation to determine whether or not a timing advance (TA) adjustment is needed to maintain physical synchronization between the WTRU 120 and the eNB 110 (step 520). If a TA adjustment is needed (step 520), then the eNB transmits a TA command to the particular WTRU 120 (step 530). This TA command may be sent on the DL common control channel or on a control channel mapped to a DL shared channel assigned to the particular WTRU 120.

[0041] Since a periodic NCB channel may be configured following a predefined period during which no UL transmissions have been occurring, the NCB channel can be dynamically allocated, or

established, during periods of UL inactivity to maintain synchronization. By maintaining synchronization during periods of inactivity with the NCB channel, transmission may be restarted with reduced latency which allows QoS requirements to be better maintained.

[0042] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram of a method **600** for determining DL scheduling modifications using an NCB channel, in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention. The WTRU **120** transmits a burst to the eNB **110** over the NCB channel reporting the DL channel quality measurements (step **610**). When the eNB **110** receives the channel quality measurements, the eNB **110** analyzes them to determine whether or not modifications, or adjustments, to DL scheduling need to be made (step **620**). DL channel quality measurements may be reported periodically or dynamically based on triggering events. Preferably, channel quality reporting coincides with the configured allocation of the NCB channel. Use of the NCB channel for WTRU measurement reporting provides a more efficient use of physical resources and provides UL information signaling with reduced latency compared to use of a RACH, or dynamically requesting a UL shared channel for this purpose. If a DL scheduling modification is needed (step **630**), then the eNB **110** transmits the new DL channel scheduling assignments to the WTRU **120** (step **640**). [0043] In the embodiment shown in FIG. 6, the NCB channel may be periodically configured or event triggered for UL measurement reporting. Accordingly, as described above, this use of the NCB channel may coincide with other concurrent functions or uses of the NCB channel, such as timing advance, scheduling requests, measurement reporting and the like.

[0044] FIG. 7 is a flow diagram of a method **700** of requesting UL resources using an NCB channel, in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention. In step **710**, one or more WTRUs **120** transmit a scheduling request for UL channel access on their dedicated NCB channel that has been configured and allocated for them. In the present embodiment, the NCB channel may be periodically configured or even triggered for support of scheduling requests. Additionally, the occurrence of scheduling requests may coincide with other NCB channel uses, such as timing advance, channel measurement reporting and the like.

[0045] Referring back again to FIG. 4, the transmitted request in step **710** of FIG. 7 may be a burst transmitted by one of the WTRUs **120** on its respective NCB channel (**430**, **440**, or **450**) requesting an allocation of UL physical resources whereby the presence of the burst itself is indicative of the resource allocation request for that particular WTRU **120**. Alternatively, the burst may be an indication which, for example, may only include one bit of information, such as a “zero (0)” or a “one (1)” that indicates whether or not a resource allocation is needed. The burst may also include information related to the resource allocation request, such as the amount of UL data the particular WTRU **120** will need to transmit, the priority of the data, the QoS, latency requirement, BLER requirement and the like.

[0046] The NCB may be configured with periodic operation with or without a specified duration. Preferably, the UL channel allocation request will coincide with the periodic operation of the NCB channel. If an urgent UL resource request is required and an NCB is not available, the RACH may be used. The UL resource request method may coincide with the timing advance method **500**, or measurement reporting method **600**. In these cases the NCB channel provides multiple purposes in a common UL transmission.

[0047] Based on the UL resource request, a proper allocation of resources is determined and the eNB **110** transmits the UL shared access grant to the one or more WTRUs **120** on a DL common control channel (step **720**), as shown in FIG. 7.

[0048] For purposes of example, FIG. 8 is an exemplary time-frequency diagram **800** depicting an allocation of physical resources, in accordance with step **720** of the method **700** of FIG. 7. FIG. 8 is a time-frequency diagram **800** that includes an allocated resources portion **830** and an allocated resource blocks portion **840**. In the present example, the allocated resources portion **830** depicts a resource allocation for WTRU.sub.1 (**831**), a resource allocation for WTRU.sub.2 (**832**), and a resource allocation for WTRU.sub.3 (**833**). In this manner, the resource allocation may be

determined implicitly by the WTRUs **120** based on the resource utilized for the access grant in the DL transmission.

[0049] Alternatively, the resource allocations **831**, **832**, and **833** may correspond to allocated resource blocks in the allocated resource blocks portion **840**. For example, referring again to FIG. **8**, resource allocation **831** corresponds to a single resource block **844** allocated for WTRU.sub.1. However, resource allocation **832** corresponds to three (3) resource blocks **845** that are allocated for WTRU.sub.2, while resource allocation **833** corresponds to two (2) resource blocks **846** that are allocated for WTRU.sub.3. It should be noted that the resource block allocation shown in FIG. **8** is exemplary and any particular resource allocation may correspond to a single resource block or to a plurality of resource blocks. An identifier (ID) for the particular WTRU **120** that is allocated a resource block may be included to identify to the WTRU **120** which resource block belongs to it. Alternatively, the DL control channel may be common to a plurality of WTRUs **120**.

[0050] In any event, the resource allocation is identified to the WTRU **120** as to any period that the resource is allocated for that WTRU **120**, as well as where that allocation exists. For example which resource blocks are allocated to a particular WTRU **120** is identified to the WTRU **120**.

[0051] Once particular WTRUs **120** receive their shared channel access grants in the DL, the WTRUs **120** transmit over their allocated channels or resource blocks (step **730**).

[0052] In yet another embodiment, the NCB channel may be utilized for keep-alive heartbeat. For example, the WTRU **120** transmits a periodic keep-alive signal over the NCB channel that is utilized by the system to detect a failure of the radio link between the WTRU **120** and the eNB **110**. In this manner, the system can institute any action required to restore any lost connectivity with this particular WTRU **120** as well as recover any resources that are allocated to the WTRU **120**.

Additionally, as with various other NCB channel functions and uses, signaling for the keep-alive heartbeat may be combined with other NCB channel functions whose UL channel requirement coincides. For the purposes of a keep-alive signal a similar NCB channel may be allocated in the DL so that the WTRU may take proper actions required following a link failure.

[0053] In another embodiment, the NCB channel may be utilized for HARQ feedback. For example, in response to HARQ transmissions, the NCB channel may be utilized for transmission of positive (successful) or negative (unsuccessful) acknowledgements (ACKs). Additionally, the process number or any other HARQ parameters used to coordinate HARQ transmissions may be transmitted over the NCB channel, depending on the HARQ method. The NCB channel may be particularly useful in the case of synchronous HARQ operation where periodic feedback may be aligned with the periodic configuration of the NCB channel.

[0054] In another alternative embodiment, the NCB channel may be utilized for MAC signaling, RRC signaling and/or small amounts of user data. Additionally, coordination of the MAC and/or RRC layer operation may be achieved over the NCB channel. In these cases, procedures with known frequency may be mapped to the NCB channel to optimize the use of physical resources. The WTRUs **120** may also transmit small amounts of data on their allocated NCB channel. In this manner, the NCB channel may be used by WTRUs **120** to transmit small amounts of user data when shared channel or other alternate channel is not available/allocated. Allowing user data on the NCB channel reduces transmission latency and improves QoS.

[0055] In order to provide resilience against frequency selective fading, the UL NCB channels may comprise several sub-channels in an XFDMA system, such as an orthogonal frequency-division multiple-access (OFDMA) or single carrier (SC) FDMA system (SC-FDMA). In one subframe of an XFDMA system, there are short blocks (SB) and long blocks (LB). An SB is typically used to transmit the reference signals and an LB is typically used to transmit data packets. The reference signals provide a complete view of the channel layout in one OFDM subframe for a particular WTRU **120**, and may also be utilized for channel measurements to determine the severity of the frequency selective fading. Accordingly, it can be used to determine how diverse in frequency the NCB channel allocation will need to be.

[0056] FIG. 9 is an exemplary block diagram 900 depicting a frequency diverse NCB channel allocation in a system comprising a plurality of sub-channels, in accordance with the present invention. For example, as depicted in FIG. 9, the NCB channel allocations for WTRU.sub.1 and WTRU.sub.2 are shown spread over a plurality of sub-channels that may exist in a single resource block or in a fraction of a resource block. Then the NCB channel is allocated in a distributed manner based on the UL channel measurements.

[0057] Further efficiency may be achieved in the utilization of the NCB channel where the resource is changed for a particular WTRU 120. For example, the NCB resource allocation may be changed according to a pre-configured time and/or frequency hopping pattern. An NCB channel with a very small amount of channel resources may not have good frequency diversity even if the NCB channel is spread as wide as possible in the frequency domain. Therefore, applying time and/or frequency hopping may further improve the diversity and ensure the NCB channel is received properly at a receiver side.

[0058] FIG. 10 is an exemplary time-frequency diagram 1000 depicting a time and frequency hopping NCB channel allocation, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In different subframes, where the resource is allocated to a particular WTRU 120, the frequency allocation of the resource for an NCB channel will change across subframes. This frequency allocation change is based on the hopping pattern in the time and/or frequency domain, which is pre-configured during the NCB allocation phase. This is another alternative embodiment for physical realization of the NCB channel. The frequency/timing hopping pattern is an important message when signaling NCB channel allocation for a particular WTRU 120 so that it can transmit using the NCB channel according to that hopping pattern. Likewise, the eNB 110 can receive signaling by following the same pattern in a coordinated way.

[0059] The NCB channel may be further configured by the eNB 110 transmitting control messages to the WTRU 120. For example, the eNB 110 may transmit a resource message relating to sub-carriers, space (antenna beams), slots, or codes. Additionally, the eNB 110 may transmit a hopping sequence, such as an index of a prescribed set of hopping sequences to the WTRU 120 to which the NCB channel is allocated.

[0060] In an additional embodiment, the NCB channel may be allocated along with both real time (RT) and non real time (NRT) services to assist dynamic, semi-dynamic, persistent or semi-persistent scheduling for the services.

[0061] For NRT services, the NCB channel may be allocated to support dynamic scheduling. For example, the NCB channel may be used for timing advance, periodic measurement reporting, UL physical resource requesting, UL traffic status reporting, providing information for DL resource scheduling, HARQ feedback and/or MAC/RRC layer signaling, and the like. The NCB channel supporting dynamic or semi-dynamic scheduling may be configured at the beginning of the dynamic or semi-dynamic scheduling of an NRT service for one WTRU, or in the middle of the scheduling. Also the NCB channel can be terminated, modified or extended as situations such as WTRU mobility or channel conditions change.

[0062] An NCB channel for some particular applications may have consistent periodicity from the beginning of the scheduling allocation of the NCB. Alternatively, the NCB channel for other particular applications may start its periodicity at a certain time after each bursty transmission.

[0063] For example, in the former case, timing advance and measurement reporting may require continuous reporting to support accurate scheduling decisions. However, a HARQ ACK/NAK feedback does not necessarily need to maintain its periodicity from the beginning of the scheduling, and the NCB channel can therefore start a certain time after one bursty transmission for several times unless successful reception is declared.

[0064] The duration of the NCB channel may be terminated before its allocated life cycle expires or be extended based on system demand. Termination of an existing NCB may be signaled through an indication from the eNB 110 via an RRC message, MAC signaling (such as a MAC header) or

layer 1 or layer 2 (L1/L2) signaling. In one example, the indication can simply be an “OFF (0)” signal.

[0065] The termination of the NCB channel allocation can be explicitly or implicitly signaled. For example, at the end of voice silent period, the WTRU **120** sends a voice activity change indication to eNB **110** over the NCB channel. The eNB **110** then allocates new persistent UL radio resources for voice activity over the DL scheduling channel. Upon receiving the UL resource allocation on the DL scheduling channel, the WTRU **120** may implicitly detect the termination of existing NCB channel allocations. Alternatively, one explicit indication can be sent from the eNB **110** to the WTRU **120** to signal the termination.

[0066] An extension of the NCB channel may be for a substantially same duration as a previous allocation or for a different duration, either longer or shorter. The extension may also include a configuration of new time and frequency allocation patterns, such as frequency hopping.

[0067] The periodicity of the NCB channel may be determined based on the application of the NCB channel. For example, in a WTRU high mobility scenario, a high periodicity NCB channel should be allocated to support UL timing maintenance. How often measurement reports should be sent to the eNB **110** are also determined based on the application of the NCB channel.

[0068] FIG. **11** is an exemplary diagram depicting differing NCB channel requirements for a WTRU, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Referring to FIG. **11**, more than one NCB channel may be allocated simultaneously to a particular WTRU **120** for different scheduling purposes. These different NCB channels may have different configurations. For example, among other things, NCB channel periodicity and channel capacity may be configured to meet different requirements.

[0069] In a voice silent period, there may be NCB channels used to maintain UL timing, to send voice activity reports, to send measurement reports, to send UL scheduling requests and to send voice silence indication detections (SIDs), and the like to eNB **110**. However, the periodicity for SID packets in the UL is every 160 milliseconds (ms), which may be different from the periodicity required for other functions. For example, the periodicity for a UL timing advance function may be either shorter or longer than the periodicity for sending SIDs. Also, radio resources used for SID packets and other UL utility purposes are different, which again requires different NCB channel configurations. Accordingly, different NCB channel configurations and allocations for different system requirements may be required. On the other hand, applications with similar resource and periodicity requirements may be grouped into one NCB channel configuration and allocation.

[0070] Additionally, there may be different application requirements for one WTRU where an NCB channel with one periodicity is allocated. In this case, the NCB channel may be configured with different radio resource allocations for different intervals within one NCB allocation. For example, a SID packet interval may coincide with other UL functions such as a UL scheduling request, timing maintenance and measurement reporting, and the like, for example every 160 ms. However, if at 160 ms intervals there are more radio resources needed to accommodate extra SID packet needs, the eNB **110** may allocate more radio resources at 160 ms intervals, and less resources at non-160 ms intervals. In doing so, the eNB **110** does not need to always allocate the maximum radio resources for all the NCB channel intervals to accommodate all different scenarios, thereby making resource utilization much more efficient.

[0071] Additionally, the NCB channel should be maintained during handovers from one base station to another. To this end, a source base station exchanges signaling with a target base station to allocate the NCB channel for the WTRU **120** in the target cell to which the WTRU is being handed over. This may be accomplished by transmission via a common control channel in the source cell or a shared channel allocated to a particular WTRU **120** to convey target cell NCB channel information to the particular WTRU **120**. The information may include NCB channel resources in the target cell, hopping patterns in the target cell, or the timing advance, such as the timing difference between the source and target cells. The timing difference between cells in this

case may be computed by the system and transmitted to the WTRU 120 about to be handed over by the source or target base station.

[0072] The present invention may be implemented in any type of wireless communication system, as desired. By way of example, the present invention may be implemented in any type of 802 type system, XFDMA, SC-FDMA, OFDMA, E-UTRA, LTE or any other type of wireless communication system.

[0073] Additionally, the features of the present invention may be implemented by software, may be incorporated into an integrated circuit (IC) or be configured in a circuit comprising a multitude of interconnecting components. Additionally, the processors 115/125 of the eNB 110 and WTRU 120, respectively, may be configured to perform the steps of any of the methods described above. The processors 115/125 may also utilize the receivers 116/126, transmitters 117/127, and antennas 118/128, respectively, to facilitate wirelessly receiving and transmitting data.

[0074] Although the features and elements of the present invention are described in the preferred embodiments in particular combinations, each feature or element can be used alone without the other features and elements of the preferred embodiments or in various combinations with or without other features and elements of the present invention. The methods or flow charts provided in the present invention may be implemented in a computer program, software, or firmware tangibly embodied in a computer-readable storage medium for execution by a general purpose computer or a processor. Examples of computer-readable storage mediums include a read only memory (ROM), a random access memory (RAM), a register, cache memory, semiconductor memory devices, magnetic media such as internal hard disks and removable disks, magneto-optical media, and optical media such as CD-ROM disks, and digital versatile disks (DVDs).

[0075] Suitable processors include, by way of example, a general purpose processor, a special purpose processor, a conventional processor, a digital signal processor (DSP), a plurality of microprocessors, one or more microprocessors in association with a DSP core, a controller, a microcontroller, Application Specific Integrated Circuits (ASICs), Field Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs) circuits, any integrated circuit, and/or a state machine.

[0076] A processor in association with software may be used to implement a radio frequency transceiver for in use in a wireless transmit receive unit (WTRU), user equipment, terminal, base station, radio network controller, or any host computer. The WTRU may be used in conjunction with modules, implemented in hardware and/or software, such as a camera, a videocamera module, a videophone, a speakerphone, a vibration device, a speaker, a microphone, a television transceiver, a handsfree headset, a keyboard, a Bluetooth module, a frequency modulated (FM) radio unit, a liquid crystal display (LCD) display unit, an organic light-emitting diode (OLED) display unit, a digital music player, a media player, a video game player module, an Internet browser, and/or any wireless local area network (WLAN) module.

Claims

1. A method implemented by a wireless transmit/receive unit (WTRU), the method comprising: receiving configuration information, the configuration information indicating an allocation for non-contention based (NCB) uplink control channel transmissions, the configuration information indicating a first periodicity and first resources allocated to the WTRU for sending scheduling requests via the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation; transmitting a scheduling request via one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation, wherein the scheduling request comprises a burst, and the scheduling request indicates a priority of data to be transmitted by the WTRU; receiving a downlink control channel transmission after transmitting the scheduling request via the one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation, the downlink control channel transmission comprising an uplink shared channel allocation; and transmitting data

associated with the priority in accordance with the uplink shared channel allocation.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein presence of a burst in the one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation is indicative of a request for resources by the WTRU.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein resources of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions are a combination of time, frequency, and code multiplexed.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the resources of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions are further spatially multiplexed.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising transmitting one or more hybrid automatic repeat request (HARQ) bits in the one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions.
6. A wireless transmit/receive unit (WTRU) configured to: receive configuration information, the configuration information indicating an allocation for non-contention based (NCB) uplink control channel transmissions, the configuration information indicating a first periodicity and first resources allocated to the WTRU for sending scheduling requests via the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation; transmit a scheduling request via one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation, wherein the scheduling request comprises a burst, and the scheduling request indicates a priority of data to be transmitted by the WTRU; receive a downlink control channel transmission after transmitting the scheduling request via the one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation, the downlink control channel transmission comprising an uplink shared channel allocation; and transmit data associated with the priority in accordance with the uplink shared channel allocation.
7. The WTRU of claim 6, wherein presence of a burst in the one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions associated with the allocation is indicative of a request for resources by the WTRU.
8. The WTRU of claim 6, wherein resources of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions are a combination of time, frequency, and code multiplexed.
9. The WTRU of claim 8, wherein the resources of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions are further spatially multiplexed.
10. The WTRU of claim 6, wherein the WTRU is configured to transmit one or more hybrid automatic repeat request (HARQ) bits in the one or more of the NCB uplink control channel transmissions.
11. A method implemented by a wireless transmit/receive unit (WTRU), the method comprising: receiving configuration information, the configuration information indicating a first allocation of a non-contention based (NCB) uplink control channel for transmission of channel quality information, the configuration information indicating a first periodicity and first resources allocated to the WTRU for sending the channel quality information in accordance with the first allocation of the NCB uplink control channel; periodically transmitting the channel quality information in accordance with the first allocation of the NCB uplink control channel; receiving at least one downlink transmission; determining hybrid automatic repeat request feedback for the at least one downlink transmission, wherein a second allocation of the NCB uplink control channel for transmission of the HARQ feedback for the at least one downlink transmission is indicated via a downlink control channel transmission; and transmitting the HARQ feedback for the at least one downlink transmission in accordance with the second allocation of the NCB uplink control channel indicated via the downlink control channel transmission.
12. The method of claim 11, further comprising: receiving a third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel for transmission of scheduling requests, the third allocation indicating a second periodicity and third resources allocated to the WTRU for sending the scheduling requests in accordance with the third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel; and transmitting a scheduling request in accordance with the third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel.

- 13.** The method of claim 12, wherein the scheduling request transmitted in accordance with the third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel indicates a priority of data to be transmitted by the WTRU.
- 14.** The method of claim 11, wherein resources of the NCB uplink control channel are a combination of time, frequency, and code multiplexed.
- 15.** The method of claim 11, wherein resources of the NCB uplink control channel are associated with a hopping sequence.
- 16.** A wireless transmit/receive unit (WTRU) configured to: receive configuration information, the configuration information indicating a first allocation of a non-contention based (NCB) uplink control channel for transmission of channel quality information, the configuration information indicating a first periodicity and first resources allocated to the WTRU for sending the channel quality information in accordance with the first allocation of the NCB uplink control channel; periodically transmit the channel quality information in accordance with the first allocation of the NCB uplink control channel; receive at least one downlink transmission; determine hybrid automatic repeat request feedback for the at least one downlink transmission, wherein a second allocation of the NCB uplink control channel for transmission of the HARQ feedback for the at least one downlink transmission is indicated via a downlink control channel transmission; and transmit the HARQ feedback for the at least one downlink transmission in accordance with the second allocation of the NCB uplink control channel indicated via the downlink control channel transmission.
- 17.** The WTRU of claim 16, wherein the WTRU is configured to: receive a third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel for transmission of scheduling requests, the third allocation indicating a second periodicity and third resources allocated to the WTRU for sending the scheduling requests in accordance with the third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel; and transmit a scheduling request in accordance with the third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel.
- 18.** The WTRU of claim 17, wherein the scheduling request transmitted in accordance with the third allocation of the NCB uplink control channel indicates a priority of data to be transmitted by the WTRU.
- 19.** The WTRU of claim 16, wherein resources of the NCB uplink control channel are a combination of time, frequency, and code multiplexed.
- 20.** The WTRU of claim 16, wherein resources of the NCB uplink control channel are associated with a hopping sequence.
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