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HEARING DEVICE COMMUNICATIONS VIA DATA

Abstract

A gaming headset receives a chat audio channel that conveys chat audio. The gaming headset includes a modem that modulates data for communication over the chat audio channel, and transmits the modulated data on the chat audio channel that conveys the chat audio. The modulated data may be communicated, via the chat audio channel, to one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The modulated data includes one or more dual tone multi-frequency tones. The gaming headset may also receive data, via the chat audio channel, from one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game.

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Background/Summary

CLAIM OF PRIORITY [0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 16/424,180 filed on May 28, 2019, now U.S. Pat. No. 10,946,269, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 15/950,857 filed on Apr. 11, 2018, now U.S. Pat. No. 10,300,369, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 15/614,729 filed on Jun. 6, 2017, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,943,753, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 14/445,559 filed on Jul. 29, 2014, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,669,294, which claims the benefit of priority to U.S. provisional patent application 61/899,917 filed on Nov. 5, 2013, titled “Method and System for Inter-Headset Communications via Data Over In-Game Audio,” each of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

[0002] U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/040,144 titled “Game Headset with Programmable Audio” and published as US2012/0014553 is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0003] Aspects of the present application relate to electronic gaming. More specifically, to methods and systems for inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio.

BACKGROUND

[0004] Limitations and disadvantages of conventional approaches to audio processing for gaming will become apparent to one of skill in the art, through comparison of such approaches with some aspects of the present method and system set forth in the remainder of this disclosure with reference to the drawings.

BRIEF SUMMARY

[0005] Methods and systems are provided for inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio, substantially as illustrated by and/or described in connection with at least one of the figures, as set forth more completely in the claims.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIG. 1A is a diagram that depicts an example gaming console, which may be utilized to provide inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0007] FIG. 1B is a diagram that depicts an example gaming audio subsystem comprising a headset

and an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0008] FIG. 1C is a diagram of an exemplary gaming console and an associated network of peripheral devices, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0009] FIGS. 2A and 2B are diagrams that depict two views of an example embodiment of a gaming headset, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0010] FIG. 2C is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the example headset of FIGS. 2A and 2B, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0011] FIG. 3A is a diagram that depicts two views of an example embodiment of an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0012] FIG. 3B is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0013] FIG. 4 is a block diagram of an exemplary multi-purpose device, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0014] FIG. 5A is a diagram of an exemplary system that enables inter-headset communication over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0015] FIG. 5B is a diagram of an exemplary subsystem in a gaming headset that enables inter-headset communication over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

[0016] FIG. 5C shows circuitry of an example headset configured for communicating voice and non-voice data over a chat audio channel.

[0017] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating exemplary steps for providing inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0018] Certain embodiments of the disclosure may be found in a method and system for inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio. In accordance with various aspects of the disclosure, a gaming headset receives a plurality of audio channels during play of a particular game. The plurality of audio channels comprises game audio channels that convey audio for the game, and a chat audio channel that conveys chat audio. The gaming headset includes an integrated analog voiceband modem that modulates data for communication over the chat audio channel, and transmits the modulated data on the chat audio channel that conveys the chat audio. The modulated data may be communicated, via the chat audio channel, to one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The modulated data includes one or more dual tone multi-frequency tones. The gaming headset may receive data, via the chat audio channel, from one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The gaming headset may demodulate the data, which is received via the chat audio channel, from the one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The transmitted data and the demodulated data may comprise parameter settings, scrambling keys, and/or messages comprising text, image, and/or video content. At least a portion of the demodulated data may be converted to audio data, which may be played from speakers on the gaming headset. The gaming headset may receive the data from a second screen communication device that is communicatively coupled to the gaming headset. A gamer that is engaged in the particular game may utilize the second screen communication device to send the data. The data that is received from the second screen communication device may be communicated to another second screen communication device via the chat audio channel. The another second screen communication device may be utilized by another gamer that is engaged in the particular game. The gaming headset may acquire the modulated data from a storage device within the gaming headset.

[0019] FIG. 1A depicts an example gaming console, which may be utilized to provide inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiment

of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 1A, there is shown a console **176**, user interface devices **102**, **104**, a monitor **108**, an audio subsystem **110**, and a network **106**.

[0020] The game console **176** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to present a game to, and also enable game play interaction between, one or more local players and/or one or more remote players. The game console **176** which may be, for example, a Windows computing device, a Unix computing device, a Linux computing device, an Apple OSX computing device, an Apple iOS computing device, an Android computing device, a Microsoft Xbox, a Sony Playstation, a Nintendo Wii, or the like. The example game console **176** comprises a radio **126**, network interface **130**, video interface **132**, audio interface **134**, controller hub **150**, main system on chip (SoC) **148**, memory **162**, optical drive **172**, and storage device **174**. The SoC **148** comprises central processing unit (CPU) **154**, graphics processing unit (GPU) **156**, audio processing unit (APU) **158**, cache memory **164**, and memory management unit (MMU) **166**. The various components of the game console **176** are communicatively coupled through various buses/links **112**, **138**, **140**, **142**, **144**, **146**, **152**, **136**, **160**, **168**, and **170**.

[0021] The controller hub **150** comprises circuitry that supports one or more data bus protocols such as High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI), Universal Serial Bus (USB), Serial Advanced Technology Attachment II, III or variants thereof (SATA II, SATA **111**), embedded multimedia card interface (eMMC), Peripheral Component Interconnect Express (PCIe), or the like. The controller hub **150** may also be referred to as an input/output (I/O) controller hub. Exemplary controller hubs may comprise Southbridge, Haswell, Fusion and Sandybridge. The controller hub **150** may be operable to receive audio and/or video from an external source via link **112** (e.g., HDMI), from the optical drive (e.g., Blu-Ray) **172** via link **168** (e.g., SATA II, SATA III), and/or from storage **174** (e.g., hard drive, FLASH memory, or the like) via link **170** (e.g., SATA II, III and/or eMMC). Digital audio and/or video is output to the SoC **148** via link **136** (e.g., CEA-861-E compliant video and IEC 61937 compliant audio). The controller hub **150** exchanges data with the radio **126** via link **138** (e.g., USB), with external devices via link **140** (e.g., USB), with the storage **174** via the link **170**, and with the SoC **148** via the link **152** (e.g., PCIe).

[0022] The radio **126** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more wireless standards such as the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, the Bluetooth family of standards, near field communication (NFC), and/or the like.

[0023] The network interface **130** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more wired standards and to convert between wired standards. For example, the network interface **130** may communicate with the SoC **148** via link **142** using a first standard (e.g., PCIe) and may communicate with the network **106** using a second standard (e.g., gigabit Ethernet).

[0024] The video interface **132** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate video in accordance with one or more wired or wireless video transmission standards. For example, the video interface **132** may receive CEA-861-E compliant video data via link **144** and encapsulate/format, etc., the video data in accordance with an HDMI standard for output to the monitor **108** via an HDMI link **120**.

[0025] The audio interface **134** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate audio in accordance with one or more wired or wireless audio transmission standards. For example, the audio interface **134** may receive CEA-861-E compliant audio data via the link **146** and encapsulate/format, etc. the video data in accordance with an HDMI standard for output to the audio subsystem **110** via an HDMI link **122**.

[0026] The central processing unit (CPU) **154** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the game console **176**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system of the device **192** (FIG. 1C) and/or part of one or more software applications running on the device **192**

(FIG. 1C).

[0027] The graphics processing unit (GPU) **156** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform graphics processing functions such as compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, 3D rendering, and/or the like.

[0028] The audio processing unit (APU) **158** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform audio processing functions such as volume/gain control, compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, surround-sound processing, and/or the like to output single channel or multi-channel (e.g., 2 channels for stereo or 6, 8, or more channels for surround sound) audio. The APU **158** comprises memory (e.g., volatile and/or non-volatile memory) **159** which stores parameter settings to affect processing of audio by the APU **158**. For example, the parameter settings may include a first audio gain/volume setting that determines, at least in part, a volume of game audio output by the console **176** and a second audio gain/volume setting that determines, at least in part, a volume of chat audio output by the console **176**. The parameter settings may be modified via a graphical user interface (GUI) of the console and/or via an application programming interface (API) provided by the console **176**.

[0029] The cache memory **164** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may provide high-speed memory functions for use by the CPU **154**, GPU **156**, and/or APU **158**. The cache memory **164** may typically comprise DRAM or variants thereof. The memory **162** may comprise additional memory for use by the CPU **154**, GPU **156**, and/or APU **158**. The memory **162**, typically DRAM, may operate at a slower speed than the cache memory **164** but may also be less expensive than cache memory as well as operate at a higher speed than the memory of the storage device **174**. The MMU **166** controls accesses by the CPU **154**, GPU **156**, and/or APU **158** to the memory **162**, the cache **164**, and/or the storage device **174**.

[0030] In FIG. 1A, the example game console **176** is communicatively coupled to the user interface device **102**, the user interface device **104**, the network **106**, the monitor **108**, and the audio subsystem **110**.

[0031] Each of the user interface devices **102** and **104** may comprise, for example, a game controller, a keyboard, a motion sensor/position tracker, or the like. The user interface device **102** communicates with the game console **176** wirelessly via link **114** (e.g., Wi-Fi Direct, Bluetooth, NFC and/or the like). The user interface device **102** may be operable to communicate with the game console **176** via the wired link **140** (e.g., USB or the like).

[0032] The network **106** comprises a local area network and/or a wide area network. The game console **176** communicates with the network **106** via wired link **118** (e.g., Gigabit Ethernet).

[0033] The monitor **108** may be, for example, a LCD, OLED, or PLASMA screen. The game console **176** sends video to the monitor **108** via link **120** (e.g., HDMI).

[0034] The audio subsystem **110** may be, for example, a headset, a combination of headset and audio basestation, or a set of speakers and accompanying audio processing circuitry. The game console **176** sends audio to the audio subsystem **110** via link(s) **122** (e.g., S/PDIF for digital audio or “line out” for analog audio). Additional details of an example audio subsystem **110** are described below.

[0035] FIG. 1B is a diagram that depicts an example gaming audio subsystem comprising a headset and an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 1B, there is shown a console **176**, a headset **200** and an audio basestation **301**. The headset **200** communicates with the basestation **301** via a link **180** and the basestation **301** communicates with the console **176** via a link **122**. The link **122** may be as described above. In an example implementation, the link **180** may be a proprietary wireless link operating in an unlicensed frequency band. The headset **200** may be as described below with reference to FIGS. 2A-2C. The basestation **301** may be as described below with reference to FIGS. 3A-3B.

[0036] FIG. 1C is a diagram of an exemplary gaming console and an associated network of peripheral devices, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring

to FIG. 1C, there is shown is the console **176**, which is communicatively coupled to a plurality of peripheral devices and a network **106**. The example peripheral devices shown include a monitor **108**, a user interface device **102**, a headset **200**, an audio basestation **301**, and a multi-purpose device **192**.

[0037] The monitor **108** and the user interface device **102** are as described above. The headset **200** is as described below with reference to FIGS. 2A-2C. The audio basestation is as described below with reference to, for example, FIGS. 3A-3B.

[0038] The multi-purpose device **192** may comprise, for example, a tablet computer, a smartphone, a laptop computer, or the like and that runs an operating system such as Android, Linux, Windows, iOS, OSX, or the like. An example multi-purpose device is described below with reference to FIG. 4. Hardware (e.g., a network adaptor) and software (i.e., the operating system and one or more applications loaded onto the device **192**) may configure the device **192** for operating as part of the GPN **190**. For example, an application running on the device **192** may cause display of a graphical user interface (GUI), which may enable a user to access gaming-related data, commands, functions, parameter settings, and so on. The graphical user interface may enable a user to interact with the console **176** and the other devices of the GPN **190** to enhance the user's gaming experience.

[0039] The peripheral devices **102**, **108**, **192**, **200**, **300** are in communication with one another via a plurality of wired and/or wireless links (represented visually by the placement of the devices in the cloud of GPN **190**). Each of the peripheral devices in the gaming peripheral network (GPN) **190** may communicate with one or more others of the peripheral devices in the GPN **190** in a single-hop or multi-hop fashion. For example, the headset **200** may communicate with the basestation **301** in a single hop (e.g., over a proprietary RF link) and with the device **192** in a single hop (e.g., over a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi direct link), while the tablet may communicate with the basestation **301** in two hops via the headset **200**. As another example, the user interface device **102** may communicate with the headset **200** in a single hop (e.g., over a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi direct link) and with the device **192** in a single hop (e.g., over a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi direct link), while the device **192** may communicate with the headset **200** in two hops via the user interface device **102**. These example interconnections among the peripheral devices of the GPN **190** are merely examples, any number and/or types of links and/or hops among the devices of the GPN **190** is possible.

[0040] The GPN **190** may communicate with the console **176** via any one or more of the connections **114**, **140**, **122**, and **120** described above. The GPN **190** may communicate with a network **106** via one or more links **194** each of which may be, for example, Wi-Fi, wired Ethernet, and/or the like.

[0041] A database **182** which stores gaming audio data is accessible via the network **106**. The gaming audio data may comprise, for example, signatures (or “acoustic fingerprints”) of particular audio clips (e.g., individual sounds or collections or sequences of sounds) that are part of the game audio of particular games, of particular levels/scenarios of particular games, particular characters of particular games, etc. In an example implementation, the database **182** may comprise a plurality of records **183**, where each record **183** comprises an audio clip (or signature of the clip) **184**, a description of the clip **185** (e.g., the game it is from, when it occurs in the game, etc.), one or more gaming commands **186** associated with the clip, one or more parameter settings **187** associated with the clip, and/or other data associated with the audio clip. Records **183** of the database **182** may be downloadable to, or accessed in real-time by, one of more devices of the GPN **190**.

[0042] FIGS. 2A and 2B are diagrams that depict two views of an example embodiment of a gaming headset, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIGS. 2A and 2B, there are shown two views of an example headset **200** that may present audio output by a gaming console such as the console **176**. The headset **200** comprises a headband **202**, a microphone boom **206** with microphone **204**, ear cups **208a** and **208b** which surround speakers **216a** and **216b**, connector **210**, connector **214**, and user controls **212**.

[0043] The connector **210** may be, for example, a 3.5 mm headphone socket for receiving analog

audio signals (e.g., receiving chat audio via an Xbox “talkback” cable).

[0044] The microphone **204** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to convert acoustic waves (e.g., the voice of the person wearing the headset) to electric signals for processing by circuitry of the headset and/or for output to a device (e.g., console **176**, basestation **301**, a smartphone, and/or the like) that is in communication with the headset.

[0045] The speakers **216a** and **216b** may comprise circuitry that may be operable to convert electrical signals to sound waves.

[0046] The user controls **212** may comprise dedicated and/or programmable buttons, switches, sliders, wheels, etc. for performing various functions. Example functions which the controls **212** may be configured to perform include: power the headset **200** on/off, mute/unmute the microphone **204**, control gain/volume of, and/or effects applied to, chat audio by the audio processing circuitry of the headset **200**, control gain/volume of, and/or effects applied to, game audio by the audio processing circuitry of the headset **200**, enable/disable/initiate pairing (e.g., via Bluetooth, Wi-Fi direct, NFC, or the like) with another computing device, and/or the like. Some of the user controls **212** may adaptively and/or dynamically change during game play based on a particular game that is being played. Some of the user controls **212** may also adaptively and/or dynamically change during game play based on a particular player that is engage in the game play. The connector **214** may be, for example, a USB, thunderbolt, Firewire or other type of port or interface. The connector **214** may be used for downloading data to the headset **200** from another computing device and/or uploading data from the headset **200** to another computing device. Such data may include, for example, parameter settings (described below). Additionally, or alternatively, the connector **214** may be used for communicating with another computing device such as a smartphone, tablet compute, laptop computer, or the like.

[0047] FIG. 2C is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the example headset of FIGS. 2A and 2B, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 2C, there is shown a headset **200**. In addition to the connector **210**, user controls **212**, connector **214**, microphone **204**, and speakers **216a** and **216b** already discussed, shown are a radio **220**, a CPU **222**, a storage device **224**, a memory **226**, and an audio processing circuit **230**.

[0048] The radio **220** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more standardized (such as, for example, the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, NFC, the Bluetooth family of standards, and/or the like) and/or proprietary wireless protocol(s) (e.g., a proprietary protocol for receiving audio from an audio basestation such as the basestation **301**).

[0049] The CPU **222** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the headset **200**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system or state machine of the headset **200** and/or part of one or more software applications running on the headset **200**. In some implementations, the CPU **222** may be, for example, a programmable interrupt controller, a state machine, or the like.

[0050] The CPU **222** may also be operable to handle inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio of a plurality of audio channels. In this regard, the CPU **222** may be operable to control the receiving of a plurality of audio channels comprising game audio channels that convey audio for the game, and a chat audio channel that conveys chat audio. The CPU **222** may be operable to dynamically configure a voiceband modem that is integrated within the gaming headset **200** to handle modulation of data for communication over the chat audio channel. The CPU **222** may be operable to control the transmission of the modulated data on the chat audio channel that conveys the chat audio. In this regard, the CPU **222** may be operable to control the communication of the modulated data to one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game, via the chat audio channel. The modulated data may include, for example, one or more dual tone multi-frequency (DTMF) tones.

[0051] The storage device **224** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may comprise, for example, FLASH or other nonvolatile memory, which may be operable to store data comprising operating data, configuration data, settings, and so on, which may be used by the CPU **222** and/or the audio processing circuit **230**. Such data may include, for example, parameter settings that affect processing of audio signals in the headset **200** and parameter settings that affect functions performed by the user controls **212**. For example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a gain of one or more gain elements of the audio processing circuit **230**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a frequency response of one or more filters that operate on audio signals in the audio processing circuit **230**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, whether and which sound effects are added to audio signals in the audio processing circuit **230** (e.g., which effects to add to microphone audio to morph the user's voice). Example parameter settings which affect audio processing are described in the co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/040,144 titled "Game Headset with Programmable Audio" and published as US2012/0014553, the entirety of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. Particular parameter settings may be selected autonomously by the headset **200** in accordance with one or more algorithms, based on user input (e.g., via controls **212**), and/or based on input received via one or more of the connectors **210** and **214**.

[0052] The memory **226** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may comprise volatile memory used by the CPU **222** and/or audio processing circuit **230** as program memory, for storing runtime data, etc. In this regard, the memory **226** may comprise information and/or data that may be utilized to control the headset **200** to modulate data for transmission over the chat audio channel and demodulate data that is received from the chat audio channel.

[0053] The audio processing circuit **230** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform audio processing functions such as volume/gain control, compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, introduction of audio effects (e.g., echo, phasing, virtual surround effect, etc.), and/or the like. As described above, the processing performed by the audio processing circuit **230** may be determined, at least in part, by which parameter settings have been selected. The processing performed by the audio processing circuit **230** may also be determined based on default settings, player preference, and/or by adaptive and/or dynamic changes to the game play environment. The processing may be performed on game, chat, and/or microphone audio that is subsequently output to speaker **216a** and **216b**. Additionally, or alternatively, the processing may be performed on chat audio that is subsequently output to the connector **210** and/or radio **220**.

[0054] In operation, the headset **200** may be operable to modulate data for communication over the chat audio channel. The headset **200** may be operable to transmit the modulated data on the chat audio channel. The headset **200** may be operable to receive data over the chat audio channel and demodulate the received data. During transmission, the headset **200** may be operable to communicate the transmitted data to one or more devices (e.g., headsets) associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in play of the game. During reception, the headset **200** may be operable to receive the transmitted data from one or more of the devices that are associated with the one or more other gamers that are engaged in play of the game.

[0055] FIG. 3A is a diagram that depicts two views of an example embodiment of an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 3A, there is shown an exemplary embodiment of an audio basestation **301**. The basestation **301** comprises status indicators **302**, user controls **310**, power port **313**, and audio connectors **314**, **316**, **318**, and **320**.

[0056] The audio connectors **314** and **316** may comprise digital audio in and digital audio out (e.g., S/PDIF) connectors, respectively. The audio connectors **318** and **320** may comprise a left "line in" and a right "line in" connector, respectively. The controls **310** may comprise, for example, a power

button, a button for enabling/disabling virtual surround sound, a button for adjusting the perceived angles of the speakers when the virtual surround sound is enabled, and a dial for controlling a volume/gain of the audio received via the “line in” connectors **318** and **320**. The status indicators **302** may indicate, for example, whether the audio basestation **301** is powered on, whether audio data is being received by the basestation **301** via connectors **314**, and/or what type of audio data (e.g., Dolby Digital) is being received by the basestation **301**.

[0057] FIG. **3B** is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the audio basestation **301**, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. **3B**, there is shown an exemplary embodiment of an audio basestation **301**. In addition to the user controls **310**, indicators **302**, and connectors **314**, **316**, **318**, and **320** described above, the block diagram additionally shows a CPU **322**, a storage device **324**, a memory **326**, a **319**, an audio processing circuit **330**, and a radio **332**.

[0058] The **319** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more standardized (such as the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, the Bluetooth family of standards, NFC, and/or the like) and/or proprietary (e.g., proprietary protocol for receiving audio protocols for receiving audio from a console such as the console **176**) wireless protocols.

[0059] The radio **332** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more standardized (such as, for example, the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, the Bluetooth family of standards, and/or the like) and/or proprietary wireless protocol(s) (e.g., a proprietary protocol for transmitting audio to the headphones **200**).

[0060] The CPU **322** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the audio basestation **301**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system or state machine of the audio basestation **301** and/or part of one or more software applications running on the audio basestation **301**. In some implementations, the CPU **322** may be, for example, a programmable interrupt controller, a state machine, or the like.

[0061] The storage **324** may comprise, for example, FLASH or other nonvolatile memory for storing data which may be used by the CPU **322** and/or the audio processing circuit **330**. Such data may include, for example, parameter settings that affect processing of audio signals in the basestation **301**. For example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a gain of one or more gain elements of the audio processing circuit **330**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a frequency response of one or more filters that operate on audio signals in the audio processing circuit **330**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, whether and which sound effects are added to audio signals in the audio processing circuit **330** (e.g., which effects to add to microphone audio to morph the user's voice). Example parameter settings which affect audio processing are described in the co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/040,144 titled “Gaming Headset with Programmable Audio” and published as US2012/0014553, the entirety of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. Particular parameter settings may be selected autonomously by the basestation **301** in accordance with one or more algorithms, based on user input (e.g., via controls **310**), and/or based on input received via one or more of the connectors **314**, **316**, **318**, and **320**.

[0062] The memory **326** may comprise volatile memory used by the CPU **322** and/or audio processing circuit **330** as program memory, for storing runtime data, etc.

[0063] The audio processing circuit **330** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform audio processing functions such as volume/gain control, compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, introduction of audio effects (e.g., echo, phasing, virtual surround effect, etc.), and/or the like. As described above, the processing

performed by the audio processing circuit **330** may be determined, at least in part, by which parameter settings have been selected. The processing may be performed on game and/or chat audio signals that are subsequently output to a device (e.g., headset **200**) in communication with the basestation **301**. Additionally, or alternatively, the processing may be performed on a microphone audio signal that is subsequently output to a device (e.g., console **176**) in communication with the basestation **301**.

[0064] FIG. **4** is a block diagram of an exemplary multi-purpose device **192**, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. The example multi-purpose device **192** comprises an application processor **402**, memory subsystem **404**, a cellular/GPS networking subsystem **406**, sensors **408**, power management subsystem **410**, LAN subsystem **412**, bus adaptor **414**, user interface subsystem **416**, and audio processor **418**.

[0065] The application processor **402** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the multi-purpose device **192** as well as graphics processing functions of the multi-purpose device **192**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system of the console and/or part of one or more software applications running on the console.

[0066] The memory subsystem **404** comprises volatile memory for storing runtime data, nonvolatile memory for mass storage and long-term storage, and/or a memory controller which controls reads/writes to memory.

[0067] The cellular/GPS networking subsystem **406** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform baseband processing and analog/RF processing for transmission and reception of cellular and GPS signals.

[0068] The sensors **408** comprise, for example, a camera, a gyroscope, an accelerometer, a biometric sensor, and/or the like.

[0069] The power management subsystem **410** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to manage distribution of power among the various components of the multi-purpose device **192**.

[0070] The LAN subsystem **412** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform baseband processing and analog/RF processing for transmission and reception of wired, optical, and/or wireless signals (e.g., in accordance with Wi-Fi (IEEE 802.11 and variants thereof 802.11 e.g., a, b, g, n, ac, q, Wi-Fi Direct), Bluetooth, ZigBee, Ethernet, and/or other standards).

[0071] The bus adaptor **414** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable for interfacing one or more internal data busses of the multi-purpose device with an external bus (e.g., a Universal Serial Bus) for transferring data to/from the multi-purpose device via a wired connection.

[0072] The user interface subsystem **416** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to control and relay signals to/from a touchscreen, hard buttons, and/or other input devices of the multi-purpose device **192**.

[0073] The audio processor **418** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to process (e.g., digital-to-analog conversion, analog-to-digital conversion, compression, decompression, encryption, decryption, resampling, etc.) audio signals. The audio processor **418** may be operable to receive and/or output signals via a connector such as a 3.5 mm stereo and microphone connector.

[0074] FIG. **5A** is a diagram of an exemplary system that enables inter-headset communication over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. **5**, there are shown an exemplary system **500** comprising a plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n**, a plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n**, a plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n**, and a network **508**. Each of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n** may comprise a

corresponding application **507a**, **507b**, . . . , **507n** that runs thereon. The plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n** may be collectively referenced as game consoles **502**. The plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may be collectively referenced as gaming headsets **504**. The plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n** may be collectively referenced as second screen communication devices **506**.

[0075] Each of the plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to present a game to, and also enable game play interaction between, one or more local players and/or one or more remote players. For example, a gamer utilizing the gaming headset **504a** may engage in playing a particular game with one or more of the gamers that may be wearing the headsets **502b**, . . . , **502n**. Each of the plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n** may be substantially similar to the game console **176** which is illustrated in and described with respect to, for example, FIGS. **1A**, **1B**, and **1C**. Each of the plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n** may be operable to handle a plurality of audio channels comprising game audio channels and a chat audio channel. The game audio channel is utilized to convey audio for a game and the chat audio channel is operable to convey chat audio. The game audio channel may be utilized for the transmission and reception of the game audio via the network **508**. The chat audio channel may be utilized for transmission and reception of the chat audio via the network **508**. The chat audio channel may carry voice data (as is conventionally carried on the chat audio channel) as well as data other that has been modulated onto one or more carriers in the chat audio band (e.g., which may be, for example, from -500 Hz to -2000 Hz).

[0076] In accordance with various embodiments of the disclosure, each of the plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n** may be operable to convey data to and/or from respective ones of the plurality of gaming headset **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** over the chat audio channel via the network **508**. For example, the game console **502b** may be operable to receive data on the chat audio channel from the gaming headset **504b** and convey the received data on the chat audio channel to one or more of the gaming headset **504a** via the gaming console **502a**, and the gaming headset **504n** via the gaming console **502n**. In an example embodiment, the headsets **504** and/or devices **507** may perform the modulation and demodulation of the chat audio band carriers such that the game consoles **502** are unaware that data other than voice data is present on the chat channel. In another example embodiment, the headsets **504** and/or devices **507** may communicate the raw data to the game consoles **502** and the game consoles may perform the modulation and demodulation of the data onto a carrier in the chat audio band for transmission via the chat channel.

[0077] Each of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to receive audio from the game console to which it is connected. The received audio may comprise game audio and/or chat audio. Each of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may also be operable to generate chat audio on the chat audio channel. In accordance with various embodiments of the disclosure, each of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may be operable to communicate data on the chat audio channel, including voice data as is conventionally communicated on the chat channel as well as other data which is modulated onto a carrier in the chat audio band such that it can be communicated over the frequencies and bandwidths of the chat channel. The data that is communicated over the chat audio channel may be conveyed to another one of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** and/or one or more of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n**. In this regard each of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may be operable to modulate the data onto the game audio channel for transmission. For example, the gaming headset **504n** may be operable to modulate the data onto the game audio channel for transmission via the chat audio channel to the gaming headset **504a** and/or the gaming headset **504b**. Each of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may be operable to demodulate the data that is received from the chat audio channel. For example, the gaming headset **504b** and/or the gaming headset **504n** may be operable to demodulate the data

received from the gaming headset **504n** via the chat audio channel. Exemplary data other than voice data that may be communicated via the chat audio channel may comprise parameter settings, scrambling keys, and/or messages comprising text, images and/or video content.

[0078] Each of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or devices that may enable communication with respective ones of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n**. Data sent from a first of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n**, which is coupled to a first of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n**, may be communicated to one or more other ones of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n**. For example, the second screen communication devices **506a**, which is communicatively coupled to the gaming headset **504a**, may be operable to communicate data to the gaming headset **504a**. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to modulate the data onto one or more carriers in the chat audio band for communicating the data, via the game console **502a**, to one or both of the gaming headset **504b** and/or the gaming headset **504n** over the chat audio channel.

[0079] Each of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . **506n** may comprise a corresponding application **507a**, **507b**, . . . , **507n**. Each of the applications **507a**, **507b**, . . . , **506n** running on respective ones of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n** may be operable to wirelessly communicate data to and/or receive data from respective ones of the gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n**. In this regard, for example, a gamer utilizing the gaming headset **504b** may be operable to utilize the application **507b** running on the second screen communication device **506b** to enter data. The entered data may be wirelessly communicated from the second screen communication device **506b** to the gaming headset **504b**. The gaming headset **504b** may be operable to modulate the data onto one or more carriers within the chat audio band, and transmit the modulated data via the game console **502b** to one or more of the second screen communication devices **506a**, **506n**. The second screen communication device **506b** may be operable to receive data, via the gaming headset **504b**, which was sent from one or more of the second screen communication devices **506a**, **506n** via the chat audio channel. The data which is received from one or more of the second screen communication devices **506a**, **506n** may be demodulated by the gaming headset **504b** and communicated to the application **507b** running on the second screen communication device **506b**. A listener of the gaming headset **504b** may consume the demodulated data via the application **507b** running on the second screen communication device **506b**.

[0080] The network **508** may comprise suitable interfaces and/or devices that may enable the communication of gaming information between a plurality of the game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n**. The gaming information may comprise gaming video, gaming audio and/or chat audio. The network **508** may comprise the Internet, an intranet, an office network, a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), a medium area network (MAN), and/or personal area network (PAN). The network **508** may comprise a wireless and/or wired network. In this regard, the network **508** may be operable to utilize one or more technologies such as 3G, 4G, 5G, Ethernet, 802.11, 802.16, Bluetooth, and/or variants of these technologies. In various embodiments of the disclosure, the network **508** may be operable to convey data among the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** via respective ones of the plurality of game consoles **502a**, **502b**, . . . , **502n**.

[0081] In operation, each of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may be operable to modulate data and transmit the modulated data via the chat audio channel. The modulated data may be communicated via the chat audio channel to one or more other ones of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n**. The one or more other ones of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** may be operable to receive and demodulate the modulated data. The resulting demodulated data may be communicated by the one or more other ones of the plurality of gaming headsets **504a**, **504b**, . . . , **504n** to respective ones of the one or more of the plurality of second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n**. In an exemplary

embodiment of the disclosure, a first gamer wearing the gaming headset **504a** may utilize the second screen communication device **506a** to send data during play of a particular game. A second gamer wearing the gaming headset **504b** may utilize the second screen communication device **506b** to send data during play of the particular game. A third gamer wearing the gaming headset **504n** may utilize the second screen communication device **506n** to send data during play of the particular game. The first gamer may utilize the application **507a** running on the second screen communication device **506a** to send data to the gaming headset **504a**. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to modulate the data and transmit the modulated data on the chat audio channel. The game console **502a** may be operable to convey the data that is modulated on the chat audio channel to one or more of the game console **502b**, . . . , **502n**.

[0082] When the game console **502b** receives the data that is modulated on the chat audio channel, the game console **502b** may be operable to communicate the data that is modulated on the chat audio channel to the gaming headset **504b**. The gaming headset **504b** may be operable to demodulate the data that is received via the chat audio channel and communicate the demodulated data to the second screen communication device **506b**. The application **507b**, which is running on the second screen communication device **506b**, may be operable to receive the demodulated data. The second screen communication device **506b** may be utilized by the second gamer who is engaged in play of the particular game and is wearing the gaming headset **504b**. In this regard, the second gamer may utilize the application **507b**, which is running on the second screen communication device **506b**, to consume the demodulated data.

[0083] When the game console **502n** receives the data that is modulated on the chat audio channel, the game console **502n** may be operable to communicate the data that is modulated on the chat audio channel to the gaming headset **504n**. The gaming headset **504n** may be operable to demodulate the data that is received via the chat audio channel and communicate the demodulated data to the second screen communication device **506n**. The application **507n**, which is running on the second screen communication device **506n**, may be operable to receive the demodulated data. The second screen communication device **506n** may be utilized by the third gamer who is engaged in play of the particular game and is wearing the gaming headset **504n**. In this regard, the third gamer may utilize the application **507n**, which is running on the second screen communication device **506n**, to consume the demodulated data.

[0084] FIG. 5B is a diagram of an exemplary subsystem in a gaming headset that enables inter-headset communication over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 5B, there is shown an exemplary system **520** comprising a game console **522**, a monitor **523**, a gaming headset **524**, and a second screen communication device **526a**. The gaming headset **524** may comprise an audio processor **524a**, a memory **524b**, a voiceband modem **524c**, a DTMF encoder/decoder **524d**, a radio **524e** and a CPU **524f**. The second screen communication device **526a** may comprise a screen **529a** and an application **527a**.

[0085] The game console **522** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to present a game to, and also enable game play interaction between, one or more local players and/or one or more remote players. The game console **522** may be substantially similar to the game console **176**, which is shown in and described with respect to FIG. 1A, for example. The game console **522** may be operable to generate output video signals for a particular game over a video channel and output corresponding audio signals for the game over one or more of a plurality of audio channels. Exemplary audio channels may comprise a center (CTR) channel, a front right (FR) channel, a front left (FL) channel, a rear right (RR) channel, a rear left (RL) channel, a side right (SR) channel, and a side left (SL) channel. The audio and video generated from the game console **522** during play of the particular game may be communicated to and presented by the monitor **523**.

[0086] In some example embodiments of the disclosure, the basestation **301** (FIG. 1B) may be operable to provide connectivity between the gaming headset **524**, the game console **522** and the

second screen communication device **526a**. In this regard, the basestation **301** may be operable to handle transmission and reception of the information or data between the second screen communication device **526a**, the gaming headset **524** and/or to the game console **522**.

[0087] The monitor **523** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to display corresponding audio and video that may be received from the game console **522** for the particular game during play of the particular game play. The monitor **523** may comprise a television (TV), computer monitor, laptop display, and so on.

[0088] The gaming headset **524** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to receive the plurality of audio channels of game and/or chat audio. The gaming headset **524** may be substantially similar to the headset **200**, which is shown in and described with respect to FIGS. **2A**, **2B** and **2C**, for example. The gaming headset **524** may be operable to receive data from the application **527a** running on the second screen communication device **526a**. The gaming headset **524** may be operable to modulate the data received from the application **527a** onto a carrier in the chat audio band, and transmit the modulated data via the chat audio channel. The gaming headset **524** may be operable to demodulate the data that is received from another gaming headset, via the chat audio channel, and communicate the demodulated data to the second screen communication device **526a**. Exemplary data that may be communicated via the chat audio channel may comprise voice data, parameter settings, scrambling keys, and/or messages comprising text, images and/or video content.

[0089] The audio processor **524a** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to handle audio processing for the gaming headset **524**. For example, the audio processor **524a** may be operable to handle processing of game audio, microphone audio and/or chat audio. The audio processor **524a** may be substantially similar to the audio processing circuit **230**, which is shown in and described with respect to FIG. **1A**, for example.

[0090] The memory **524b** may comprise one or more suitable devices that may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to store information that may be utilized to control operation of the gaming headset **524** and audio information for a game. In this regard, the memory **524b** may comprise information that may be utilized to control and/or manage operation of one or more of the audio processor **524a**, the memory **524b**, the voiceband modem **524c**, the DTMF encoder/decoder **524d**, the radio **524e** and a CPU **524f**. The memory **524b** may be substantially similar to the storage device **224**, which is shown in and described with respect to FIG. **2C**, for example. The memory **524a** may be operable to store parameter settings, scrambling keys, and/or messages comprising text, images and/or video content.

[0091] The voiceband modem **524c** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to handle modulation and demodulation of data for the gaming headset **524**. In an embodiment of the disclosure, the voiceband modem **524c** may be an analog voiceband modem. In this regard, the voiceband modem **524c** may be operable to modulate data that may be received by the gaming headset **524** from the second screen communication device **526a**. A gamer that may be listening to the gaming headset **524** and is engaged in play of the particular game may enter the data by utilizing the application **527a** that is running on the second screen communication device **526a**. The data that is modulated by the voiceband modem **524c** may be transmitted over the chat audio channel. The voiceband modem **524c** may also be operable to demodulate data that is received by the gaming headset **524** via the chat audio channel by the game console **522**. The demodulated data may be communicated to the application **527a** running on the second screen communication device **526a**, where it may be consumed by the gamer that may be listening to the gaming headset **524** and is engaged in play of the particular game.

[0092] In addition to data being entered by a user (e.g., via second screen device and/or audio commands spoken into the headset), data may be automatically inserted into the chat audio by a game console, second screen device, and/or headset. For example, in response to detecting a particular sound in the game audio or chat audio, a headset may automatically generate data,

modulate the data onto a chat audio band carrier, and transmit the modulated carrier onto the chat audio channel. Similarly, a game console, headset, or second screen device may automatically take action in response to receiving data over the chat audio channel. For example, in response to receiving a parameter setting on the chat audio channel, a headset may automatically (without intervention by the wearer of the headset) load the parameter setting.

[0093] The CPU **524f** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling, managing and/or coordinating the overall operation of the gaming headset **524**. In this regard, the CPU **524f** may be operable to control, manage and coordinate operation of the components in the gaming headset **524**, which comprises the audio processor **524a**, the memory **524b**, the voiceband modem **524c**, the DTMF encoder/decoder **524d**, and the radio **524e**. The CPU **524f** may, for example, automatically reconfigure the audio processor **524a** in response to receiving a command to do so in the form of a command modulated onto an audio band carrier and sent over the chat audio channel. The CPU **524f** may also be operable to coordinate and manage operations between the gaming headset **524**, and the game console **522**. The CPU **524f** may be substantially similar to the CPU **222**, which is shown in and described with respect to FIG. 2C, for example.

[0094] The DTMF encoder/decoder **524d** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to encode data received from the application **527a** in the second screen communication device **526a** to DTMF tones. The gaming headset **524** may be operable to communicate the DTMF tones via the chat audio channel and the game console **522** to one or more other gaming headsets. The DTMF encoder/decoder **524d** may also be operable to decode DTMF tones that may be received by the gaming headset **524** via the chat audio channel from the game console **522**. The decoded DTMF tones may be converted to data and may be communicated from the gaming headset **524** to the application **527a** in the second screen communication device **526a**. A simple encoding scheme may comprise encoding one message for a particular tone. Other encoding schemes may be utilized without departing from spirit and/or scope of the various embodiments of the disclosure.

[0095] The radio **524e** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate signals between the gaming headset **524** and the game console **522** and/or between the gaming headset **524** and the second screen communication device **526a**. The radio **524e** may be substantially similar to the radio **220**, which is illustrated in and described with respect to FIG. 2C, for example. In accordance with an example embodiment of the disclosure, the gaming headset **524** may be operable to utilize the radio **524e** to communicate to and from the second screen communication device **526a** via the communication link **510a** and/or to the game console **522** via the communication link **512a**. The gaming headset **524** may be operable to utilize the radio **524e** to communicate data to and/or from the second screen communication device **526a** via the communication link **510a** and/or to and/or from the game console **522** via the communication link **512a**. The gaming peripheral network **190** (FIG. 1C) illustrates an exemplary communication network that may be utilized for communication by the second screen communication devices **506**, the game console **502**, and the gaming headset **524**.

[0096] The second screen communication device **526a** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute or run an application **527a**. A gamer listening to the headset **524** may enter data into the application **527a**. The entered data may be communicated to the gaming headset **524**, which may modulate the data for communication via the chat audio channel. In this regard, the second screen communication device **526a** may be operable to communicate with the gaming headset **524** via the communication link **510a** in order to receive the data that is to be transmitted on the game audio channel by the gaming headset **524**. The second screen communication device **526a** may be substantially similar to the each of the plurality of second screen communication device **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n**, which are illustrated in and described with respect to FIG. 5A, for example.

[0097] The application (app) **527a** may comprise suitable logic, interfaces and/or code that may enable the second screen communication device **526a** to input, consume and/or receive data. In an exemplary embodiment of the disclosure, the gaming headset **524** may be operable to communicate with the app **527a**, which is running on the second screen communication device **526a**. A gamer listening to the headset **524** may enter data into the application **527a**. The entered data may be communicated to the gaming headset **524**, which may modulate the data for communication via the chat audio channel. The application **527a** may also be operable to receive data that has been received, via the audio chat channel, and demodulated by the gaming headset **524**.

[0098] In operation, the gaming headset **524** is operable to receive a plurality of audio channels during play of a particular game. The plurality of audio channels may comprise game audio channels that conveys audio for the particular game (game audio), and a chat audio channel that conveys chat audio. The audio processing circuit **524a** may be operable to process the audio signals that are received via the plurality of received audio channels from the game console **522**. In this regard, the audio processor **524a** may be operable to process game audio and chat audio for output to the game console **522**, and/or game audio and chat audio that may be received from the game console **522**.

[0099] The CPU **524f** may be operable to control the voiceband modem **524c** to modulate data for communication over the chat audio channel. The modulated data may be transmitted via the chat audio channel that conveys the chat audio. The transmitted data may be communicated to a device that may be utilized by another gamer that is engaged in play of the particular game. The gaming headset **524** may be operable to acquire the modulated data from the memory **524b**. The data may also be received from the application **527a**, which is running on the second screen communication device **526a**.

[0100] The modulated data may be communicated, via the chat audio channel, to one or more devices (e.g., second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n** in FIG. 5A), which may be associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The modulated data may comprise one or more dual tone multi-frequency tones. The gaming headset **524** may receive data, via the chat audio channel, from one or more devices associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The gaming headset **524** may also be operable to demodulate data, which is received via the chat audio channel, from the one or more devices (e.g., second screen communication devices **506a**, **506b**, . . . , **506n** in FIG. 5A), which may be associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The transmitted data and the demodulated data may comprise parameter settings, scrambling keys, and/or messages comprising text, images, and/or video content. Some or all of the demodulated data may be converted to audio data, which may be played from speakers on the gaming headset **524**.

[0101] FIG. 5C shows circuitry of an example headset configured for communicating voice and non-voice data over a chat audio channel. Shown are the connector **210**, the radio **220**, the microphone **204**, the modem **524c**, the DTMF encoder/decoder **524d**, the speakers **216**, audio processor **524a**. Also shown are a mixer circuit **550** of the audio processor **524a** and an audio processing circuit **552** of the audio processor **524a**.

[0102] The mixer **550** may be operable to combine the voice data signal received via audio input port **558** and non-voice data signal received via input port **560** into a single chat audio band signal. The output of the mixer **550** may be a chat audio band signal such that a receiving device (e.g., game consoles and/or headsets) that does not have a corresponding modem **524c** and/or DTMF encoder/decoder **524d** for demodulating/decoding the non-voice data may be unaware of the presence of the non-voice data and may process the chat audio as is conventionally done for output via speakers to a listener of such device. The listener of such a device may be similarly unaware of the non-voice data with the possible exception that an occasional noise, chirp, or the like may be perceived by a listener of such devices when the non-voice data is modulated onto a carrier that is

within the frequency range of human hearing. To further prevent the non-voice data from interfering with the voice data, the mixer **550** may be operable to monitor for periods of silence in the voice data and insert the non-voice data into such periods, may use carriers that are near the extremes of the audible band such that noise, chirps, or the like resulting from the non-voice data are inaudible (or nearly so) to a listener of such a device, and/or may ensure the bursts of non-voice data are sufficiently short so as to not significantly interfere the ability of listeners to comprehend the voice data on the chat audio channel. The output of the mixer **550** may be processed (e.g., voice data may be morphed according to voice morph parameter settings) by circuitry **552** and then output via mic audio out port **554**. In another implementation, the signals from ports **558** and **560** may be separately processed by circuit **552** before being combined into a single signal by mixer **550** and then output via port **554**.

[0103] Chat audio (which may be combined with, or separate from game audio) may be received by the audio processor **524a** via port **556**, processed by circuitry **552** (e.g., equalized, undergo chat volume boost, etc.) and then be output via port **562**. The modem **524c** may monitor the output of port **562** to detect modulated non-voice data and, upon detection of such data, demodulate the data (e.g., and send it to the CPU **524f**). Similarly, the DTMF decoder **524d** may monitor the output of port **562** for DTMF tones and, upon detecting such a tone, decode it (e.g., and send a corresponding interrupt to CPU **524f**). The speaker(s) **216** may convert the signal out of port **562** to acoustic waves. In some instances, non-voice data in the signal may result in pops, chirps, noise, etc. in the acoustic wave, but through careful control of such data, such pops, chirps, noise, etc. may be kept to a level that does not significantly hinder the experience of the listener using the headset.

[0104] FIG. **6** is a flow diagram illustrating exemplary steps for providing inter-headset communications via data over in-game audio, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. **6**, there is shown a flow chart **600** comprising a plurality of exemplary steps, namely, **602** through **614**. In step **602**, a first gamer listening to a first gaming headset **504a** enters data into a first application running **507a** on a first second screen communication device **506a**. In step **604**, the data is communicated from the first second screen communication device **506a** to the first gaming headset **504a**. In step **606**, the first gaming headset **504a** receives the data and modulates the received data. In step **608**, the first gaming headset **504a** transmits the modulated data on the chat audio channel. In step **610**, a second gaming headset **504b** receives the modulated data on the chat audio channel and demodulates the modulated data. In step **612**, the second gaming headset **504b** communicates the demodulated data to a second second screen communication device **506b**. In step **614**, a second gamer listening to the second gaming headset **504b** consumes the demodulated data utilizing a second application **507b** running on the second screen communication device **506b**.

[0105] In accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the disclosure, with reference to FIG. **5A**, a gaming headset **504a** may be operable to receive a plurality of audio channels during play of a particular game. The plurality of audio channels comprises game audio channels that convey audio for the game, and a chat audio channel that conveys chat audio. The gaming headset **504a** may comprise an integrated analog voiceband modem **524c** (FIG. **5B**) that modulates data for communication over the chat audio channel, and transmits the modulated data on the chat audio channel that conveys the chat audio. The modulated data may comprise one or more dual tone multi-frequency tones. The modulated data may be communicated, via the chat audio channel, to one or more devices (e.g. second screen communication devices **506b**, . . . , **506n**) associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to receive data, via the chat audio channel, from one or more devices (e.g. second screen communication devices **506b**, . . . , **506n**) associated with one or more other gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to demodulate the data, which is received via the chat audio channel, from the one or more devices (e.g. second screen communication devices **506b**, . . . , **506n**) associated with one or more other

gamers that are engaged in the play of the particular game.

[0106] The data that is transmitted and/or demodulated by the gaming headset **504a** may comprise parameter settings, scrambling keys, and/or messages comprising text, image, and/or video content. The gaming headset **504a**, may be operable to convert at least a portion of the demodulated data to audio data, which may be played from speakers on the gaming headset **504a**. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to receive the data from a second screen communication device **506a** that is communicatively coupled to the gaming headset **504a**. A gamer that is engaged in the particular game may utilize the second screen communication device **506a** to send the data to the gaming headset **504a**. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to receive the data from the second screen communication device **506a** may be communicated to another second screen communication device (e.g. second screen communication devices **506b**, . . . , **506n**) via the chat audio channel. The another second screen communication device (e.g. second screen communication devices **506b**, . . . , **506n**) may be utilized by another gamer that is engaged in the particular game. The gaming headset **504a** may be operable to acquire the modulated data from a storage device such as the memory **524b** (FIG. 5B) within the gaming headset **504a**.

[0107] As utilized herein the terms “circuits” and “circuitry” refer to physical electronic components (i.e. hardware) and any software and/or firmware (“code”) which may configure the hardware, be executed by the hardware, and or otherwise be associated with the hardware. As used herein, for example, a particular processor and memory may comprise a first “circuit” when executing a first one or more lines of code and may comprise a second “circuit” when executing a second one or more lines of code. As utilized herein, “and/or” means any one or more of the items in the list joined by “and/or”. As an example, “x and/or y” means any element of the three-element set {(x), (y), (x, y)}. As another example, “x, y, and/or z” means any element of the seven-element set {(x), (y), (z), (x, y), (x, z), (y, z), (x, y, z)}. As utilized herein, the terms “e.g.,” and “for example” set off lists of one or more non-limiting examples, instances, or illustrations. As utilized herein, circuitry is “operable” to perform a function whenever the circuitry comprises the necessary hardware and code (if any is necessary) to perform the function, regardless of whether performance of the function is disabled, or not enabled, by some user-configurable setting.

[0108] Throughout this disclosure, the use of the terms dynamically and/or adaptively with respect to an operation means that, for example, parameters for, configurations for and/or execution of the operation may be configured or reconfigured during run-time (e.g., in, or near, real-time) based on newly received or updated information or data. For example, an operation within a transmitter and/or a receiver may be configured or reconfigured based on, for example, current, recently received and/or updated signals, information and/or data.

[0109] The present method and/or system may be realized in hardware, software, or a combination of hardware and software. The present methods and/or systems may be realized in a centralized fashion in at least one computing system, or in a distributed fashion where different elements are spread across several interconnected computing systems. Any kind of computing system or other apparatus adapted for carrying out the methods described herein is suited. A typical combination of hardware and software may be a general-purpose computing system with a program or other code that, when being loaded and executed, controls the computing system such that it carries out the methods described herein. Another typical implementation may comprise an application specific integrated circuit or chip. Some implementations may comprise a non-transitory machine-readable (e.g., computer readable) medium (e.g., FLASH drive, optical disk, magnetic storage disk, or the like) having stored thereon one or more lines of code executable by a machine, thereby causing the machine to perform processes as described herein.

[0110] While the present method and/or system has been described with reference to certain implementations, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents may be substituted without departing from the scope of the present method and/or system. In addition, many modifications may be made to adapt a particular situation or material to

the teachings of the present disclosure without departing from its scope. Therefore, it is intended that the present method and/or system not be limited to the particular implementations disclosed, but that the present method and/or system will include all implementations falling within the scope of the appended claims.

Claims

1-15. (canceled)

16. A method comprising: in a hearing device: receiving a modulated audio signal over a dedicated channel; and demodulating the modulated audio signal to provide an audio signal and a data signal, wherein the data signal comprises non-audio data.

17. The method according to claim 16, comprising communicating a different modulated audio signal, via the dedicated channel, to one or more devices.

18. The method according to claim 16, wherein the non-audio data comprises a parameter setting.

19. The method according to claim 16, wherein the non-audio data comprises a scrambling key.

20. The method according to claim 16, wherein the non-audio data comprises a message.

21. The method according to claim 20, wherein the message comprises text.

22. The method according to claim 20, wherein the message comprises an image.

23. The method according to claim 20, wherein the message comprises video content.

24. The method according to claim 16, wherein the modulated audio signals comprises one or more dual tone multi-frequency tones.

25. The method according to claim 16, comprising acquiring the non-audio data from a storage device.

26. A system comprising: a hearing device comprising: a receiver to receive a modulated audio signal over a dedicated channel; and a demodulator to demodulate the modulated audio signal and provide a data signal, wherein the data signal comprises non-audio data.

27. The system according to claim 26, wherein the hearing device comprises a transmitter to communicate a different modulated audio signal, via the dedicated channel, to one or more devices.

28. The system according to claim 26, wherein the non-audio data comprises a parameter setting.

29. The system according to claim 26, wherein the non-audio data comprises a scrambling key.

30. The system according to claim 26, wherein the non-audio data comprises a message.

31. The system according to claim 30, wherein the message comprises text.

32. The system according to claim 30, wherein the message comprises an image.

33. The system according to claim 30, wherein the message comprises video content.

34. The system according to claim 26, wherein the modulated chat audio signals comprises one or more dual tone multi-frequency tones.

35. The system according to claim 26, wherein the hearing device comprises a storage device for maintaining the non-audio data.
