(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SOFTWARE FEATURES SYNCHRONIZATION BETWEEN SOFTWARE SYSTEMS
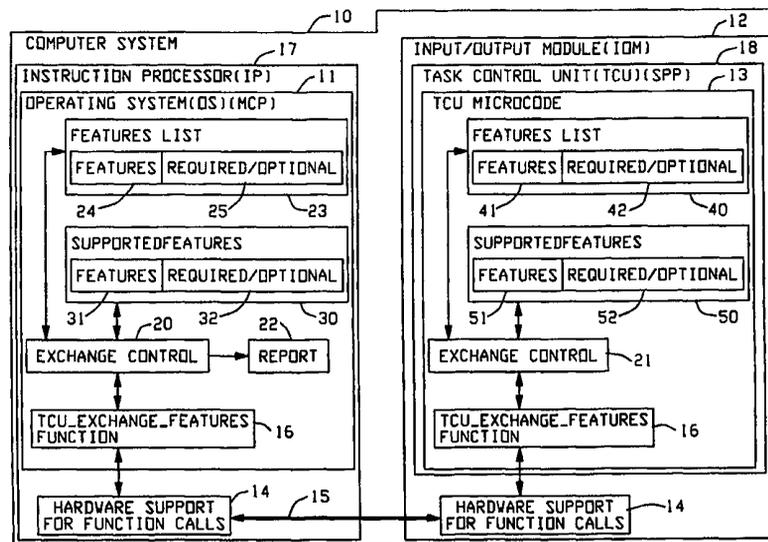
(57) Abstract

A feature coordination interface (14–16) between the operating system (OS) (11) and a Special Purpose Processor (SPP) (18) in a computer system (10). Both the OS and SPP maintain a list of bit masks (23) identified by word numbers (24, 41) where an associated bit is set in an associated bit mask if the OS or SPP supports a feature identified by the bit. During initialization, the OS transfers each of its bit masks to the SPP whereat features are compared (101–103). In response, the SPP sends each of its corresponding bit masks back to the OS together with an error indication if the OS does not support a feature required by the SPP. The OS compares its features with those of the SPP and enters an error shutdown process if the OS has received an error indication from the SPP (110(b)) or if the SPP does not support a feature required by the OS (111(b)).