

b, e, a, f, g, h, . . . and p included in the information B, which is to become the specified information 1100, items of information including the keywords are searched for. Of the keywords of the information B, which may be selected to become the specified information 1100, the keyword a is selected as the selected relation criterion, and items of information including the keyword a are displayed aligned on the selection axis 1110. The other keywords b, e, f, g, h, and p are other relation criteria, other than the selected relation criterion, and items of information including these keywords are displayed aligned on the non-selection axes 1111*b* to 1111*p*.

[0182] At this point, items of information, besides the specified information 1100, including the keyword a selected as the selected relation criterion (for example, in FIG. 11, items of information A, D and X) are displayed larger than items of information, other than the specified information 1100, including the keywords b, e, f, g, h, . . . and p, which are other relation criteria, other than the selected relation criterion. Thus, it becomes easier for the user to visually perceive whether an item of information is one which can be made the new information 1100 by simply actuating the up direction key, or one which cannot be changed to the new specified information 1100 unless an input from the up direction key is carried out after an input from the left and right direction keys.

[0183] Also, among keywords included in the information B, which may be selected to become the specified information 1100, there are some keywords, such as the keyword b, for which the items of information relating to the specified information 1100 are displayed in the display area of the display device 105 as being aligned on the non-selection axis 1111*b*. On the other hand, there are some other keywords, such as the keyword p, for which items of information related to the specified information 1100 are not displayed in the display area of the display device 105 after an input from the left or right direction keys. By limiting a number of keywords for which the related items of information are displayed in this way, even though a large number of keywords may be included in the specified information 1100, a display size of other items of information, other than the specified information 1100, may be prevented from becoming too small on the display device 105. Also, even though the number of keywords for which the related items of information are displayed is limited, as long as a fixed number of items of information are displayed, the user is not greatly hindered from visually perceiving a relationship between the other items of information and the specified information 1100.

[0184] Also, the items of information that are not displayed on the display device 105 at a certain point may be displayed on the display device 105 by repeating an operation of the up, down, left and/or right direction keys of the input device 104, such as, for example, items of information having a low score of similarity in contents to the information B, which is to become the specified information 1100, or items of information including the keyword p. Thus, the user is able to visually evaluate items of information relating to the specified information 1100, even the items of information that are not displayed on the display device 105 at a certain point, so that they should be eventually displayed on the display device 105.

[0185] Also, which of the items of information including the same relationship keyword are to be displayed in a close position to the specified information 1100 is decided based upon a value of a score calculated based on similarity in contents of the items of information to contents of the specified information 1100. In this way, even among items of information including the same keyword, that is, items of information related to the specified information 1100 by the same relation criterion, by displaying items of information having a closer relationship to the specified information 1100 closer to the specified information 1100, it becomes easier for the user to visually perceive a relationship between the present specified information 1100 and other items of information.

[0186] Meanwhile, a score of similarity in contents to the specified information 1100 is calculated when an item of information, which is to become the specified information 1100, is newly set. For this reason, which of the items of information are to be displayed in a close position to the specified information 1100 on the selection axis 1110 is updated continuously, and the items of information that are optimal at any instant in time are displayed in a position easy for the user to visually evaluate.

[0187] Furthermore, this embodiment is the same as the first embodiment in that the specified information 1100 is sequentially changed by an input from the up direction key, and the selected relation criterion is sequentially changed by an input from the left or right direction keys. Consequently, in this embodiment too, in the same way as in the first embodiment, an advantageous effect can be obtained in which, from among a plurality of items of information complicatedly relating to each other, the user can easily reach a desired item of information by visual perception. Further still, regarding a history recording and a bookmarking of the selection condition of the specified information 1100 and the selected relation criterion, it is possible to obtain the same advantageous effect as that of the first embodiment.

Modified Examples of Embodiments

[0188] The invention, without being limited to the first to third embodiments, can be modified and applied in various ways. Hereafter, a description will be given of modified aspects of the first to third embodiments of the invention.

[0189] A number of items of information displayed on the selection axes 310, 810 and 1110 and the non-selection axes 320, 330, 820 to 850 and 1111*b* to 1111*p*, which have been shown in the first to third embodiments, is not limited to the number shown in each embodiment and, as long as it includes the items of specified information 300, 800, 1100 and at least one of the items of information relating to the items of specified information 300, 800, 1100 via each of the relation criteria. Also, a number of items of information displayed aligned on the selection axes 310, 810 and 1110 and the non-selection axes 320, 330, 820 to 850 and 1111*b* to 1111*p* may be set by a user's operation of the input device 104. In this case, the user can select a display mode that is easy for the user to visually comprehend according to contents displayed on the display device 105.

[0190] Also, the number of items of information displayed on each axis may be changed by a control of the CPU 101. In this case, by controlling the CPU 101 to decide an