

[0036] Particularly apropos here is a further feature of the present invention wherein a dynamic or multifunctional highlight can be used in the simplification of the presentation, navigation, selection and/or operation of one or more of the listed items/files. FIG. 3 presents a music/MP3 playlist example with such a dynamic highlight. In this first example of a means for implementation of the present invention, a generally highlighted area 36 is shown which provides, only in direct relationship to a specific item, here item or MP3 file 32, an expanded display of a multifunctional set 38 of features, here, operational icons, e.g., icons 38a, 38b, 38c and 38d. These operational icons 38 in being operational are thus selectable as well. The focus of such a highlighted area 36 is then placed upon the currently played item, here item 32, and the operational icons 38a-38d associated therewith. An alternative addition to the selecting of a particular item may be the presentation of other features, e.g., information, in the highlight or other associated space for the selected item, as for example the artist name relative to the selection 32 in FIG. 3A. Note, the other selectable items, e.g. items 33, 34, 35, inter alia, have contrasting non-highlighted representations.

[0037] Note, up and down keys or a multi-directional key (see e.g., key 10) or other input device (joystick, roller, etc.) moves the focus/highlight area 36 in and through the list. See e.g., FIG. 3B, where the next lower option 33 has been highlighted, noting that here, an alternative of the current invention is shown where the functional icons 38 are not yet shown but rather awaiting a confirmation of the selection by a subsequent depression of a selection key, e.g. a softkey 8. This is in alternative to a potential constant re-positioning of a group of functional icons 38 within a highlight 36 at any point of correspondence with a selectable item, as highlighted, whether merely highlighted or actually selected. In this case it may be preferred for the select key to provide the primary function shortcut.

[0038] In a preferred embodiment, the highlighted area 36 provides/contains most if not all available primary functions operable with the particular software application and/or the selectable item(s) usable therewith. These functions are then represented in the displayed highlighted area 36 with icons; see e.g. icons 38a-38d. The operator or user of the phone can then initiate or otherwise change the desired function to be used directly in the highlighted area 36 using phone cursor control keys, such as for example, an arrow key or keys, see multidirectional key 10 in FIG. 1 (alternative multidirectional keys, joysticks, rollers etc. or individual right and left or up and down keys may otherwise be used as well). The functions represented by the icons may be relatively generic or may be content sensitive, i.e., may be specific to the particular software application and listed items used therewith.

[0039] In the particular example of FIG. 3 which shows involvement with a music or MP3 player application, the functional icons, here exemplified by icons 38a-38d, may represent a music play/pause button 38a, fast forward button 38b (rewind shown but not separately identified), and/or sound level control 38c (softer) and 38d (louder). Thus, in this example, the user can move an emphasized or otherwise highlighted cursor or visual selection representation (here shown by bolding and/or the darker coloring of the play/pause button 38a) to select the desired functional operation to be performed for the selected item 32 (here, the playing

of the song entitled "En halua tietää"). As shown here, the user can move the focus inside the highlight with right and left arrow keys, pressing a selection key, such as for example, a select or softkey 8 (shown in FIG. 1) performs the corresponding function.

[0040] Note, if there are several primary functions or groups of functions relative to a particular application or array of selectable items, the options button 39 may be opened when pressing the corresponding select key, to select which function or group of functions to apply. Another option for the user is to open menu (options list) and find the function there.

[0041] An alternative embodiment may be as shown in FIG. 4 and involves the highlight 36 being multifunctional through and for the entire list of selectable items 32-35. As shown in FIG. 4A, this highlight area 36 is associated with a first selectable item 32 as in FIG. 3A; however, the functional icons 38 are removed to a discrete location, here above the list of selectable items. Then, in scrolling down to a second selectable item 33 as shown in FIG. 4B, the highlight area 36 moves thereto, but the functional icons 38 (here shown in dashed lines) remain above, or at least may be activatable in the same position upon the selection (as by the depression of a select key) of a particular desired item 32 or 33, e.g. Note, other embodiments are also available as where the highlight 36 does not move but rather the selectable items are moved, e.g., scrolled, thereto. In such a case the highlight 36 and the icons 38 need neither move and indeed may alternatively be in a similar space, as for example, where the highlight also highlights the icons 38. Note here also that a consequence of selecting a particular item may bring other information into the highlight or other associated space for the selected item, as for example the artist name relative to the selection 32 in FIG. 4A.

[0042] Note that although this functionality is shown in FIGS. 3 and 4 relative to a music playing application, this feature could also be used for various alternative applications. For non-limitative examples, note that similar functionalities can be incorporated with MPEG-viewers (or other movie or audio/visual formats) with the same basic operability. Similarly, this could be used with a radio application where the functions might include: manual tune up/down, automatic tune up/down, change band, change preset station; or with a Gallery (as for photo viewing) or other File Manager including functions such as: open, edit, delete, send, rotate, zoom; and/or with a message handler, that could show a preview of the message, functions including: open, forward, reply, delete, inter alia.

[0043] As further examples of implementations of improved operator interface functionality similar to that of FIGS. 3 and 4, the various sub-part FIGS. 5A-5D of FIG. 5 depict usage of a dynamic highlight functionality like that of FIGS. 3 and 4 in use with a Contacts list. Note, other single-line item lists could and usually would work similarly. In such a single-item listing, the display 40 including a list 41 as shown first in FIG. 5A, a focus 43 (by gleaming, color or brightness or other highlight change) is placed on an item 42 in the list 41. Then, after a time period, also referred to as a timeout (the duration of the timeout may be of is not defined in this document), a functional highlight 45, also hereafter referred to as a "toolbox" 45, appears as shown in FIG. 5B. This toolbox 45 may be made to substantially