

49. The method of claim 46, wherein said vocabulary database further comprises a user database which stores linguistic objects added by the user.

50. The method of claim 49, wherein said linguistic objects added by the user in said user database are ordered by length of linguistic object and recency of use.

51. The method of claim 46, wherein said vocabulary database further comprises a recency database to support linguistic object prediction based on recency of use.

52. The method of claim 40, wherein said calculated weighted distance value is calculated based on the angular difference between each selected direction and the corresponding letter or symbol in predicted linguistic objects.

53. The method of claim 40, wherein said calculated weighted distance value is calculated based in part on the weight of each letter, said letter weight being determined by its use frequency.

54. The method of claim 39, wherein the user selects a partial linguistic object and continues with more directional inputs.

55. The method of claim 54, wherein said list of predicted linguistic objects is filtered to only include linguistic objects that begin with said selected partial linguistic object.

56. The method of claim 39, wherein the user selects an entry from said list of predicted words and the highest-ranked word containing said selected entry remains selected upon the input of additional letters until said entry becomes invalid by further addition of letters.

57. The method of claim 32, wherein said directional select means is a set of buttons.

58. The method of claim 32, wherein said directional select means is a joystick or omni-directional rocker switch.

59. The method of claim 43, wherein said on-screen keyboard further comprises a smart punctuation symbol, said smart punctuation symbol when retrieved is automatically interpreted as a punctuation symbol, diacritic mark or tonal indication at the place in the input sequence where a matching punctuation symbol, diacritic mark or tonal indication occurs in predicted words.

60. The method of claim 32, wherein a set of buttons or a second directional selection means can be used alone or with said directional selection means, separately or simultaneously, to switch or choose input modes, to change from input to word selection, or to invoke other functions.

61. The method of claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

invoking an undo means after selecting a linguistic object from said list of predicted linguistic objects; and

displaying the previous retrieved letters and showing previously retrieved list of predicted linguistic objects.

62. The method of claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

selecting a linguistic object from a text message; and

displaying the letters of said linguistic object as if said letters have been entered as exact letters and showing a retrieved list of predicted linguistic objects corresponding to said letters.

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