

PCT

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
International Bureau

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 6 : H04M 3/50, G06F 17/30, G10L 3/00		(11) International Publication Number: WO 97/28634
A1		(43) International Publication Date: 7 August 1997 (07.08.97)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB97/00233		(74) Agent: HIBBERT, Juliet, Jane, Grace; BT Group Legal Services, Intellectual Property Dept., 8th floor, 120 Holborn, London EC1N 2TE (GB).
(22) International Filing Date: 27 January 1997 (27.01.97)		
(30) Priority Data: 9601925.2 31 January 1996 (31.01.96) GB		
(60) Parent Application or Grant (63) Related by Continuation US 659,526 (CIP) Filed on 5 June 1996 (05.06.96)		
(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY [GB/GB]; 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ (GB).		
(72) Inventors; and (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): ATTWATER, David, John [GB/GB]; 154 Cavendish Street, Ipswich IP3 8BG (GB). OLSEN, Paul, Andrew [GB/GB]; 65 Alexandra Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 2RN (GB). BRIDGEMAN, Seamus, Aodhain [IE/IE]; Telecom Ireland Software, Merrion House, Merrion Road, Dublin 4 (IE). WHITTAKER, Steven, John [GB/GB]; 53 Bristol Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 4LP (GB).		(81) Designated States: AU, CA, CN, JP, KR, MX, NO, NZ, SG, US, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).
Published <i>With international search report.</i>		

(54) Title: **DATABASE ACCESS**

(57) Abstract

A method and apparatus for accessing a database system, said database system comprising a database containing entries each comprising a plurality of fields which contain machine representations of items of information pertaining to the entry, the said representations forming a first vocabulary; output means responsive to machine representations falling within a second vocabulary of such representations to generate signals representing the machine representations; and input means operable to receive signals and to produce machine representations falling within a third vocabulary of such representations. The method of accessing the database system comprises (i) generating, in accordance with a defined relationship between the first vocabulary and the third vocabulary, for each representation produced by the input means, one or more representations according to the first vocabulary; (ii) identifying database entries containing the generated representation; (iii) examining each representation or combination of representations which is contained in a selected field or combination of fields of the identified entries to identify distinguishable one(s) of those representations or combinations, a distinguishable representation or combination being one which, when translated in accordance with the defined relationship into representations of the second vocabulary, differs from every other such distinguishable representation or combination when similarly translated; and (iv) controlling the output means to generate an output including at least one word or combination of words which correspond(s) to one of the distinguishable representations or combinations.

