

clear toolbar. This helps experienced computer users feel at home at a glance, whereas inexperienced users need slight instruction to proceed to manipulate all of the features. The pleasant colorful design, the illustrations, and the vocal options, offer a stimulating environment which attends to the learning purposes of the fairly young.

In conclusion, developing the electronic dictionary was an instructive task for us. Having to account for the inherent constraints, some of which were unforeseen, some contradictive, became a challenge of surprising complexity. I am pleased that the product succeeded in attaining its two main goals: to be efficient and effective, and to be clear and easy to use.

## Designing *PASSPORT* for the Computer

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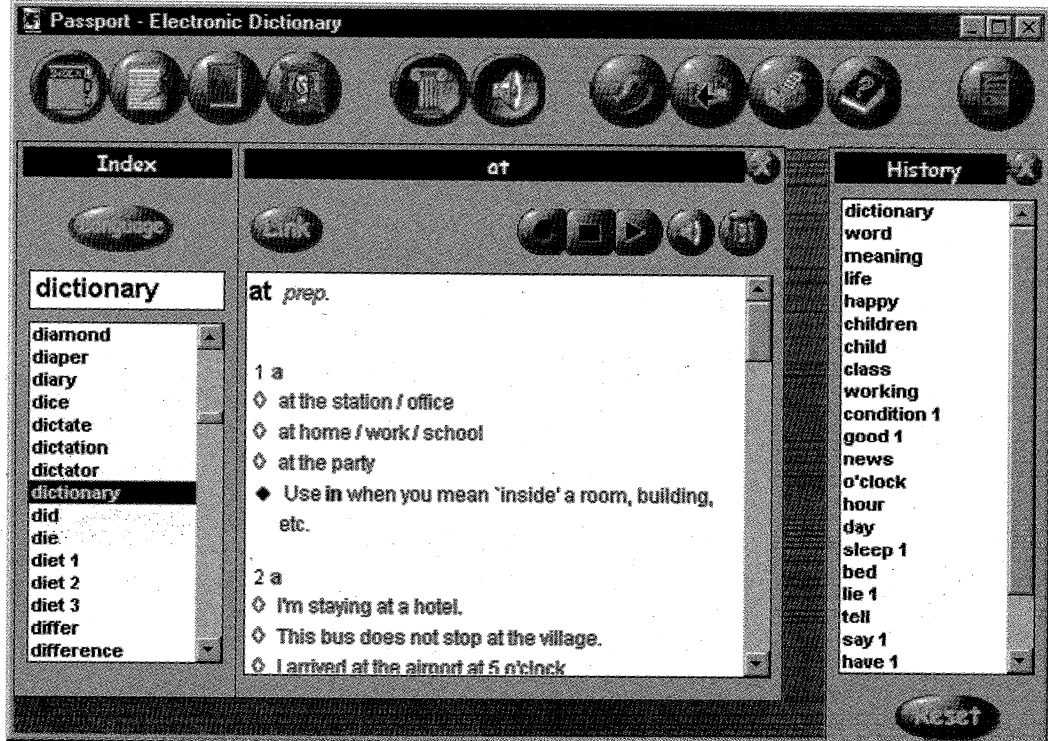
The graphic design of a computer software is often a crucial factor in its success. It can make the program more fun to use and more appealing. The design component is becoming ever more significant alongside the advance of technology. Until recently well-designed software could pride itself in having a colorful windowish interface which enables the simultaneous operation of several applications, but nowadays that is seen as a trivial requirement. Today the object is to create sensory experience by applying audio and visual wealth. The goal is to simulate real-life experience and to create virtual reality by using realistic, day-to-day sound and high quality graphics which resemble tangible elements.

Another cause for the great leap forward in the standard of software design is the Internet, which has made the common grey windows and monotonous square buttons obsolete. The current aim is to activate as many as possible of the user's senses, by displaying on the screen a lively program which resembles a real plaything with the aid of relevant sound, actual textures, and command buttons which appear like perceptible objects.

In designing *PASSPORT Electronic Dictionary*, in addition to the above considerations, we took into account the characteristics of the target audience. The program is addressed primarily to children and youth, and is supposed to provoke and help them to learn a

new language. It should thus offer the learner a comprehensive multimedia experience, but at the same time avoid creating an overburdened environment, so learning may take place under optimum conditions. It is also important to remember that this particular user age group is generally exposed to the highest quality of software design through daily use of the Internet and computer games. Since the design of the *Passport* dictionary application was carried out with these considerations in mind, our aim was to arrive at a simple yet progressive graphic display.

The idea was to present the user with a sophisticated graphic design by creating working surroundings that



are three-dimensional and colorful though not childish, and contain panels and rubber-like buttons. In order to maintain all the elements "at hand's reach", the program was designed with the approach of "everything on the screen", thus all the functions are deployed in front of the user with no element hidden from sight. The resulting product is rich in contents, with easy and straightforward access.