

The person I interviewed is a tutor in Visual Communication, and he is also a creative artist. So, I wanted to use his perspective to help me identify some of the blind spots in my own thinking.

During the interview, he pointed out that if I simply continue improving the visual effects of the website, or keep adding new ones, the website will still just be an outcome. It won't necessarily push the research forward. Instead, he suggested that I use practice to find more specific research material.

For example, computer recognition doesn't actually depend on typography in the same way that human reading does. A computer may care more about things like code, access permissions, web links, and whether something comes from the original source. So, my next stage of research probably shouldn't stay only within typography. I need to expand it to look at the structure of the website itself.

I think one possible direction is to create several different webpages. For example, I could make one that is easier for humans to understand, one that is easier for computers to read, or even different webpages designed around how different AI models access information. Another possibility is to let humans and AI read different information from the same website. In this way, I wouldn't completely leave behind my previous research into human and machine legibility. Instead, I would be extending it into a wider system. But I still need to do more technical research to understand how this could actually work, because I don't yet know exactly how different AI models access websites and interpret text. I think I need to find the answers through practice.

For example, if humans and machines enter the same website through different routes, who gets access to the information? What content can a machine capture and redistribute? And in what form does information become computable? In this way, my idea of "resistance" would no longer simply mean making the words on the screen difficult for a machine to recognise. Instead, it could more specifically question who gets to decide how information is read.

For my next step, I want to use the website to turn the normally invisible processes of communication between computers into a design language that people can actually see and share.

Question 1: My project initially explored the differences between how humans and machines recognise text, and I only introduced simulated slime mould later. Is this development still concerned with legibility? If the slime mould grows out of the letters, could it simply be a visual effect attached to the text?

Xiyue: At first, I was simply curious about the differences between how humans and computers recognise text. For example, at what point can a human still read something while a computer cannot, or a computer can read it while a human cannot? During the practical work, I found that computers were much better at making inferences than I had expected, while humans repeatedly came off worse in terms of recognition. That was why I wanted to use slime mould, a dynamic visual form in a state of growth, to make a clear word gradually lose its letterform. I saw this as a form of resistance.

BoSong: But the problem now is that it grows out of complete letters. Actual slime mould should begin from a single point and be attracted towards nutrients around it. For example, if you arranged kernels of corn into the shape of a letter, it might grow from the other side and eventually form an 'A'. In your current version, the letter already exists before the slime mould begins growing out of it, so the logic is slightly reversed. Also, genuine randomness does not exist in a computer. The fact that you do not know where it will grow does not mean that it is not controlled by rules. There is another important question as well: are you concerned with text recognition or typographic recognition? A computer does not need typography in order to recognise text.

Question 2: You pointed out a fatal flaw in my website. If AI can bypass the visual interface and read the information on the website directly, then my slime mould system cannot achieve the 'resistance' I have described. What possible solutions or further directions do you think this could lead to?

BoSong: I do not think this problem necessarily needs to be solved through the visual effect of the slime mould. If AI is not reading the words on the screen, but instead reading the original text in the input field, the webpage code, or the page structure, then however visually complex you make it, it may still be very easy for AI to read. At that point, the subject of your research cannot remain limited to typography. It needs to expand to the website itself.

In the past, websites were mainly designed for people to view. Then search engines appeared, and websites began adapting to SEO. Now that AI is gradually becoming an entry point to information, the function of websites may continue to change. They may even become a form of infrastructure in the age of AI. A machine reader may not care about typography. It may care more about the title, author, publication date, body text, relationships between links, whether the content is accessible, whether it is the original source, or whether there is a structured API.

So you could divide this question into several situations. If I want a website to be readable by people but not by AI, how could I design it? If I want AI to read it but people do not need to, how could I design it? Or could people and AI read different information from the same website? In that case, your previous research into human and machine legibility would not be completely abandoned. It would extend from the visual layer of text to the visual, textual and code layers of the website.

The specific implementation would still require technical research, because I also do not know exactly how different AI systems currently read webpages and understand text. The point may not simply be to find a way to trick AI. Instead, the experiment could examine what happens when humans and machines read the same website through different entry points: who has the right to access information, what content can be captured and redistributed by machines, and what form information must take before it becomes computable. Your 'resistance' would then no longer be limited to preventing a machine from recognising words on a screen. It would begin to address who gets to determine how information is read.

Question 3: While we were discussing the right to read, you mentioned Jev, a newly released small language model designed specifically to make judgements. If your students do not participate in making the work and simply keep giving instructions to AI, can their conversation with AI count as a creative process? Is the power to make judgements now in the hands of AI?

BoSong: Jev is a bit like an AI designed for other AI systems to use. It can respond quickly and is also cheaper. It essentially strengthens the judgement capability of AI while producing only the minimum conclusion. You could also find some small language models, configure them locally, and let them share the same knowledge base. But students using AI is a different matter. AI can skip the research, development, reflection, and trial and error that would normally take place when making a piece of work, and give them a result directly. A student may feel that a logo is not right, but all they can say is, 'Make it look better.' That is not a clearly defined need. At that point, the power to make judgements is in the hands of AI, and the student is not actively taking responsibility within the process.

Question 4: If students already had the ability to think critically while using AI, they probably would not need someone else to teach them how to use it. So I want to know whether teaching students to use AI is a responsibility. Do you believe it should be taught, or is it something that has to be taught because there is no other choice? What problems might this create?

BoSong: It should be taught because it has already become part of the teaching process. In the past, we taught theory and software. But AI does not simply deal with software related problems. It also intervenes directly in theory and working processes. For example, students might know nothing about what a book is or how a book should be designed. They only need to tell AI, 'Make me a book,' and AI will give them a result directly.

The problem is that AI can skip the research, development, reflection, and trial and error that would normally take place when making a piece of work. Five minutes after starting a project, a student might say that they want to make an installation. AI can give them a proposal immediately without carrying out any research. The student feels that the proposal is not good, but does not know why, so they can only keep asking AI to modify it. In the end, they are repeatedly revising a result that already has structural problems.

Students still need to make more judgements, make more mistakes, and experience more frustration before they can genuinely learn. If the whole process becomes too smooth, the work may move forwards, but AI has made all the decisions and the student does not know what it has done. The role of AI in teaching should not simply be to complete things for students. It should help them see the skipped steps, errors, and missing elements in the process, so that they can gradually develop a way of thinking and making decisions that allows them to work independently without a teacher.

Question 5: You suggested that a website could provide different entry points for users and AI at the same time, but AI itself has no subjective experience. So who does an 'AI friendly user experience' ultimately serve?

Xiyue: I do not think AI has experiences. Designing a website so that AI can recognise it more easily might appear to make things more convenient for AI, but does it not ultimately make things more convenient for the person using AI? For example, it could save their time and computing power, or reduce the effort they need to spend entering and organising information.

BoSong: Yes. What we call the AI experience is ultimately still a human experience. AI has no feelings, but if the underlying structure of a website is more stable, it can capture, organise, and search information more easily. It may also find better references and then provide those results to the user. So rather than describing it as satisfying the needs of AI, you could understand it as an approach whose ultimate focus is the human user, while improving the efficiency and quality of how computers read information during the process.

**Question 6: What do you think are the potential and significance of my project?
What kind of audience might it address?**

BoSong: If I had to say, its significance may lie in communication, infrastructure, and the storage and sharing of knowledge. Your audience would most likely be practice based art researchers, rather than people who are primarily theory based. They might organise workshops, make self published work, experiment with different tools, and reconsider what design means in the present, or what the core of the discipline is at the particular moment that matters to them.

I do not think your project needs to advocate for something. It is more like an experiment with a particular art form, medium, or way of thinking about design. Of course, you still need some kind of purpose, but that purpose does not necessarily have to be fully defined at the beginning. Your course structure is also not based on having a need first and then testing it. It asks you to discover new needs through a continuous process of experimentation. You will also gradually learn which experiments are likely to work and which ones have little value, because people only have a limited amount of time and energy.

Question 7: If I only describe my medium as a website, is that too broad? In this project, do you see the website as a form, a medium, a tool, or an outcome?

BoSong: Describing the website simply as the medium is a little too broad, because a website can first be understood as a form. A medium generally tends towards communication, but you can define a tool as a medium. It is just that not every tool and medium can be merged together.

If you only ask classmates to try the website, or allow AI to take control of the computer and operate it, you may be testing whether the outcome is feasible or effective. But that does not necessarily mean you are using it to explore the question of how humans and machines read. To make it a research method, you need to explain what can be discovered through particular operations, records, and comparisons. For example, humans and AI could separately read the visual, textual, and code layers of the website, and you could then compare what each of them receives. In this way, the website would no longer be only an outcome that displays an effect. It would become an experimental environment capable of continuously producing research material.