

Selected Interview Responses Regarding Key vis-UI-lise Terms

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This document contains transcribed quotes from interviews conducted with usability practitioners who used the vis-UI-lise evaluation tool. Its primary use is to support a PhD entitled 'Understanding and Evaluating User Interface Visibility' which was carried out by Ian Hosking with planned submission in 2020.

Specifically, it is referenced (within section 7.5.4) and described in Appendix G of the thesis. However, the document has a wider use for anyone wanting further insight into how usability practitioners understand key terms used in the vis-UI-lise tool. A useful summary of the tool is available in the following paper:

Hosking IM, Clarkson PJ. vis-UI-lise: developing a tool for assessing user interface visibility. In: Ahram TZ, Falcão C, editors. The 9th International Conference on Applied Human Factors and Ergonomics; 2018.

The terms contained here are 'concept', 'focus', 'conspicuity', and 'clarity' and key discussion points about them are in the tables below. The codes in the first column refer to the specific practitioner interviewed and more details about this can be found in the thesis in Chapter 7 (Section 7.4).

Terms

Term	Discussion
Concept	
CB-F2	Discussion about alternative words for 'concept': "Function" "What it is actually doing" "Feature" "Control" "Input" "Interaction points"
CC-F3	<i>"What can you see that allows you to access the function?" The answer might be, 'Nothing.' Or the answer might be, 'That button there.' Or, 'Something that I can't see, because it's around the corner.' I think</i>

that then starts... Yes. I think 'concept' is a tricky word there, isn't it? But it's, 'What is the function and what does it do?' is the sense, I think, that perhaps could make it clearer. It doesn't need to be quite as clunky as that, but..."

"Yes. Or, 'What is it, and what's it for?' That stops you getting away from, 'Well, it's a button.' 'What's it for?' Yes. I realise you can easily muddy it and end up with the two sounding quite similar. But I think if you get the first one, the concept bit right, it's then easier to say, 'What visually allows you to interact with that function?' 'Well, it's a button.' Or, 'Well, it's a bit of screen.' Or, 'I have to remember it in my head.'"

"I think the concept stuff, if you get the concept stuff right, given that it's the first thing that the user - user as in me - will come to, I think if you get that right, it gives people confidence that they're going to understand the rest of the questions."

CD-M4

"...you asked the question what is the concept of the feedback, now that doesn't intrinsically mean anything to me."

"I kind of wonder whether it's specific to those three types. So you analyse function visibility, analyse operations visibility, analyse feedback visibility and I'm not sure that the word concept works across all three."

"I'm wondering whether the first one is more explicitly about what is the function, concept is replaced by function for the first...under the function visibility it's replaced by operation under the operation one and maybe feedback."

"Okay. I think it is what is the...what is the function? So here we're assessing the function, what is the function? How is the function conveyed visually. So is this a familiar function to the user? How well is the concept...how is the function represented and are there elements missing? Are there general variations of this function that could cause confusion?"

Focus

CB-F2

"Because the word focus means as in attention as opposed to the iris and the lens"

CC-F3

"Where you've got, it's nice and explicit is, "Can the user focus on it?" That's really nice and clear."

"Does the user have move themselves, or the device to be able to see this function?' you know, that sense. Obviously, you'll need to tidy up some of the things I'm saying."

Conspicuity

CB-F2

"Now this is where it gets grey for me, obviously just because it's a word I find difficult to say as well"

"I know is meant to mean is it attention grabbing and all that malarkey and which do you see first in the hierarchy, but to me that's kind of part of focus as well, I find it hard to not link them. And so in doing that...and that was one of the things when I was trying to use the tool is that I'd be thinking about that when I'm trying to gauge this or thinking about that, and then come back to that and then think 'Oh I have to go back that and separate', and can you do that and then sort of bring it back."

"Dominance, hierarchy, attention, grabbing your attention. Focal point." (Alternative suggestions)

CC-F3

"It's not a lovely word, but it's probably the right one. I wonder if it's possible... It depends if you're willing to substitute it for something that might be less precise, but might get you a more precise answer."

"You've described it as 'attention'. 'Does it grab your attention?' I think something along those lines. I suspect 'grab' is pushing it a bit too far. 'Drawing attention?' I know you probably want a noun in there, but we can't always get the consistency we want."

CD-M3

"How many other related elements are there? Would it be better phrased something like 'How many other visual elements are there competing for the user's attention?'"

Clarity

CB-F2

"Well...yeah, this is where it gets a bit difficult between the visual and the cognitive. So for clarity to me is one of those things where I could use it in both of those categories and I think there are for most things. So if I just see clarity as a word on its own and that's a grouping for me it would mean sort of 'Okay, well how clear would it be to understand how to achieve the task and visually how clear it is to help me understand how to achieve the task?'"

CC-F3

"Yes. Key distinguishing features. Again. This comes down partly just to a way of thinking, getting used to thinking about it. But the more you can do upfront to support that, the better. I mean, there isn't much to it. I think this is probably one of the most straightforward parts, but you might want to say, perhaps, 'Describe its shape or its lighting or its position.' Maybe it isn't about position, but I suspect that there are some things that you know but you're not explicitly saying there that you do mean."

"I might call it 'visual clarity', because there is inevitably bits of language and all sorts coming through this, isn't there? So, it could be that if this was an icon that I needed to press, 'clarity' I might start worrying, 'The icon's a bit fuzzy. Is that what you mean?' Or, 'The icon is not clear in that I don't know what that house symbol means?' I think 'visual clarity' might focus the mind. You could be thinking about the clarity of an idea, not literal visual clarity."

CD-M3

"yeah, I guess that works, yeah. Distinguishing, identifying?"

"You could have an entity that is very distinguished but nobody knows what it is, but maybe that would be captured up there (Likely to be referring to 'concept'). No, maybe that works, yeah."

So you could have the correct label up there but it's not very distinguishable, which is kind of the case here, it's large but it's got poor contrast. "

Differentiation

CB-F2

"So that could be again, depending on how interpreted, differentiation could be within the screen or whatever I'm looking at, in which case it's kind of like a subset of clarity to a certain extent. Or it could be if I'm then bringing in more of the cognitive side of it, it could be differentiation of this screen or this device compared to something else."

CC-F3

"I can immediately picture that if I was looking at a CD player and you said, 'Differentiation. How different is it from other elements visible at the same time?' 'Well. It's rubbish. There are 15 silver round buttons, and they're all in a row.' I can immediately get the sense of that and understand how to answer the question."

"Elements visible at other times. That's a bit less clear to me, but I think you're tending to use screen-based options, aren't you?"

CD-M3

"Differentiation. How different is it from other elements visible at the same time? So this goes back to this sort of use of the word elements."