

Individual Assignment 1

1.1 Concepts, definition and history of AI and interaction with AI

A brief account of AI

Grudin (2009) offers a brief walk-through of the main events taking place in the field of AI. In his article, Grudin (2009) presents how AI and HCI/CHI came to be fields of their own, alongside and in competition of each other in terms of academic and economic resources (Grudin 2009, p. 49). The term “Artificial Intelligence” was used for the first time in relation to a workshop in 1956 by John McCarthy, while the line of thinking of computers as (in the future) compared to human intellect was already presented in 1949 by Alan Turing (Grudin 2009, p. 49). The term and thought of computers and AI were primarily forwarded by mathematicians, imagining the potential for computers and systems to become autonomous and intelligent. This fascination and acknowledgement of potential spread to different institutions and made in AI-research target for investments (Grudin 2009, p. 50). AI evolved alongside HCI, but with a distinct focus on intelligence and a base in the field of mathematics and later entering computer science, not necessarily grounded in psychology like HCI (Grudin 2009, pp.50-51).

Definitions of AI

Bratteteig & Verne (2018) are with their article exploring the intersection, potential, and future of participatory design (PD) and Artificial Intelligence (AI). To frame AI in this context, they are using the following definition:

“AI is a subfield of computer science aimed at specifying and making computer systems that mimic human intelligence or express rational behaviour, in the sense that the task would require intelligence if executed by a human.” (Bratteteig & Verne 2018, p. 2)

This definition is tied to human intelligence and portrait an AI definition where the processing of data and pattern recognition is more developed (for the action to also demand human intelligence when executed) and that this potentially could make decisions that would erode the need for PD in design.

A second definition on AI can be found from one of the early scientists working with AI. In the 1950'ies Marvin Minsky defined AI as following:

“the science of making machines do things that would require intelligence if done by men.” (Dennis 2021).

After this, Minsky continued to define the concept of “frames” to specify the information that is needed for machines to be able to move in space. Already in its early years, the potential for AI was compared with humans.

A third look at a definition can be found by the European Commission and presented by the Norwegian Government as:

”AI systems act in the physical or digital dimension by perceiving their environment, processing, and interpreting information and deciding the best action(s) to take to achieve the given goal. Some AI systems adapt their behaviour by analysing how the environment is affected by their previous actions.” (Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2020).

This definition is presented by the Norwegian Government as part of the National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence from 2020. AI is here presented as almost actors, as it has the ability to “perceive” their environment and make decisions based on the interpretation and processing of information – all while having a goal with this. The way AI is presented here, can again be interpreted as human-like (perceiving and interpreting) but it also makes room for the learning component, that the systems will adjust behaviour based on former behaviour patterns. This definition is very implicit on the input data and pattern recognition.

A definition of AI of my own would need to include how data is processed and applied unto known and new unknown situations – much like how a human would meet the world. It could be worded as “Artificial Intelligence describe systems being able to handle and process large quantitative amounts of data and being able to act upon old and new information.

Article review

A review of the article: “**The ‘Problem’ with Automation: Inappropriate Feedback and Interaction, not ‘Over-Automation’**” by Norman (1990).

As the development and application of technology is becoming part of our work routines, it becomes ever so relevant to discuss how such advances are affecting how we work. Through three case studies of the aviation industry, Norman (1990) offers a discussion on how automation both have meant a great leap in terms of aircraft security and an increasing disconnect between the systems and the staff. On one hand, many human errors are being erased due to systems having the control of the operation of flying an aircraft. On the other hand, Norman argues that the automation of the operations is leading to a disconnect and isolation of the staff from the systems, causing huge disadvantages, mentally and physically, as they are left ‘out of the control loop’, should a situation arise (Norman 1990, p. 140). Norman shows throughout his cases how this disconnection from the system can lead to uncontrollable situations for the staff if they are indeed ‘out of the loop’. But the answer is not only in the automation. Norman argues throughout the paper that the problem is mainly to be found in the design of the automation; in the way feedback is provided and how interaction between humans and computers/systems are designed.

The article was published in 1990. Here 31 years later our society are arguably even more automated, and thus the questions arise: How does Norman’s arguments and cases translate to the implementation and usage of automation in today’s day and age? Are we still facing the same problems regarding disconnection and being in/out of the loop?

AI as a feature

An example of AI as part of a company's business, can be the autopilot of Tesla's cars (Tesla n.d.a; Tesla n.d.b). The autopilot is a feature of the Tesla, and the potentials for the autopilot and the self-driving possibilities are presented here. On the webpage of the autopilot/AI, several aspects of the AI behind the autopilot are described: the hardware, AI as neural networks, algorithms for autonomy, the foundational coding, the infrastructure for evaluation, and lastly the Tesla bot (Tesla n.d.b.).

The AI works as a foundation for the autopilot, as it should be founded on "Advanced AI for vision and planning", alongside with the other components. Each component is both described on the page. But the language is ambivalent – for some of the components, it is written strangely with imperatively wording, almost like a suggestion to how future employees or other people of interest can work with said component.

AI is the core of the systems that enable potential self-driving and is not presented with the range of concerns that can be with an automated autopilot and self-driving cars.

AI depiction in (pop-)culture

The possibilities and potential danger of AI is a popular theme in pop-culture. One series where AI and the future of technology is addressed is the show *Black Mirror* on Netflix. One episode is particularly relevant here: "*Rachel, Jack, and Ashley Too*" (*Black Mirror* 2019). In this episode a young girl receives the AI robot doll, Ashley Too. This robot doll is modelled on a popular singer and functions as a 'friend' for our main character. The robot encourages the main character to engage and come out of her comfort zone, which crosses a boundary between human and robot according to her father and is therefore shot down. Here, in the first half of the episode, the interaction at first is portrayed very innocently as she receives the robot. Up until the shot-down, the 'friendship' becomes more and more intense, and the robot seemingly becomes more autonomous in its interaction with our main character. The relationship and form of interaction changes greatly throughout the episode, which emphasises that the systems behind Ashley Too are not linear and constant, but ever evolving – much like we see in our main character.

1.2 Robots and AI systems

How 'Robot' came about

The word Robot comes from the Czech word "Robota", meaning slave labour. Robot as a word was used for the first time in a play written by Karel Capek in 1920. The play portrayed a dystopian future where robots would take over all labour and, in the end, exterminate humanity (De Etiske Råd 2007).

Definitions of “Robot”

Two definitions on robots are presented in Thrun (2004). The definitions provided are from respectively the Robot Institute of America, 1979, and the Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 1993, and are as following:

1. “a reprogrammable, multifunctional manipulator designed to move materials, parts, tools, or specialized devices through various programmed motions for the performance of a variety of tasks.” (Thrun 2004, p. 11)
2. “An automatic device that performs functions normally ascribed to humans or a machine in the form of a human.” (Thrun 2004, p. 11)

The first definition puts a lot of emphasis on the programmable background to robots and a lot on the possibilities that the programming can lead to. The second definition on the other hand “reduces” the robot to a “automatic device” where the primary characteristic is that it can imitate human functions.

A definition of robots of my own would be something like – “*a programmed system having a physical form and able to perform specific tasks with or without human inputs*”. This definition is and cannot totally be accurate due to my limited knowledge of the full possibilities and limitations of robots. But I do think it is important to include the core elements of robots, such as the underlying programming, some sort of physical form and lastly that it holds *some* degree of autonomy.

AI and Robots

Given the definitions above, AI and robots do have some overlap. Both can be described in relation to humans and humans’ actions. They both bear potential for developing even more abilities to simulate (or surpass) the humans building them. On the other hand, they have two different forms – AI is described as large systems and networks of data and algorithms. Robots are generally ascribed a physical form. The similarities and differences are somewhat connected, when we see AI technology “inside” robots, as part of their coding, and here the boundaries are becoming blurrier.

Robot movement

An example of a commercial robot could be that of robot vacuum cleaners. The robot vacuum is one that uses sensors to measure out the dimensions of the room or potentially whole house and moves around in patterns to ensure it is vacuuming the whole space. The robot moves from a base station where it is charged and resting before its next rounds. One would think that such a robot is easy breezy to put into the daily routine. The problems that arise are both that the robot requires all/most things in the room lifted or removed from the floor and that it makes a relative amount of noise. Lifting chairs off the floor and unto the table might be easy for many, but more difficult for users having such a robot because vacuuming is too demanding. On the other hand, having a robot to assist you in your daily routine – in your home – might lead to users connecting and personifying their robot and interaction with it like a companion.

1.3 Universal Design and AI systems

A definition on Universal Design

The term “Universal Utforming” is defined in ‘Likestillings- og diskrimineringsloven’ (2017) as “Med universell utforming menes utforming eller tilrettelegging av hovedløsningen i de fysiske forholdene, inkludert informasjons- og kommunikasjonsteknologi (IKT), slik at virksomhetens alminnelige funksjoner kan benyttes av flest mulig, uavhengig av funksjonsnedsettelse.” (Likestillings- og diskrimineringsloven, 2017, Kap. 3, §17)

This definition of universal design is one that focuses on the accessibility of all public and open-to-public sites and websites. It specifies both ICT and non-ICT situations as sites for inclusion unless these precautions are themselves a hinder to the corporation. Disability is mentioned as something that should not hinder usage of the main functions, but it does not specify to what extent it is expected beyond the core functions. In return is disabilities not specified and this could be interpreted widely. As this definition is taken from a legal perspective, it probably includes broader limits, applicable to the boarder society, than a definition only concerned with interaction design.

The potential of AI with respect to diversity in users

AI has – and will probably gain more – the ability to transform or modify how we can perceive and take in the world around us. One example of how AI systems can include “more” users, is via face recognition and image recognition software. This can help users with little or no sight interact with their surroundings. Another example is the potential in making better AI systems, by providing more diverse datasets, in order for the systems to recognize and acknowledge neurodiversity. This could help users in i.e., job seeking, but also other “automatic” sorting in that ballpark.

The potential of AI for both including and excluding people.

Using AI technology to process the world around us can help include people with various degrees of disabilities. Examples of this includes automatic textng of videos and sounds and voice assistants. On the other hand, AI is also based on data and processing these in ways that is not transparent. Some degree of ‘transparency’ demanded in the WCAG (WCAG 2018) – but the processes behind AI and the feedback coming from decisions hereof are not transparent for most people, thus excluding people i.e., not working in tech.

My understanding of “understanding”

To me, understanding something relates to both how I perceive and receive information and how it is processed and connected with previous knowledge. This leaves us with a highly subjective process. Often, I would also argue that to understand and understanding a subject or a concept, mean to be able to use elements of it in practice or in relevance to other topics.

Do machines understand?

If only looking at a matter-of-fact processing process of taking in new information and taking it into a greater spider-web of knowledge, it would be possible to claim that machines can

understand. Though, I do think part of the process of understanding is also that perception, experiences, and thus the spider-web of knowledge is deeply individual and subjective. In this regard, my impression is that machines can be more “uniform” at least when sharing the same coding and processing algorithms. Then the question for me is: are machines able to make different connections and subjective experiences while having the same wiring and coding as another robot – meaning, can we apply the discussion of nature vs. nurture to machines?

1.4 Guideline for Human-AI interaction

Microsoft’s guidelines for human-AI interaction

One of the guidelines defined by Microsoft, is Guideline 6: Mitigate social biases (Amershi et al. 2019). This guideline is supposed to address how social biases should be mitigated i.e., by using language that does not assume gender and other such prejudices we might hold in social settings.

One other example that this guideline could address, could be that of data bias in AI and how AI react and act differently to people of different skin tones. These biases are seen today in i.e., face recognition and could be mitigated by a more conscious effort to ‘feed’ the systems with more diverse data material.

Human-AI interaction guidelines and WCAG

The Human-AI interaction guidelines put a lot of emphasis on the feedback of the system to the user (and back) and how to guide and meet the expectations of the user in interaction with the system (esp. guidelines 1, 2, 5, 11, 16 & 18) (Amershi et al. 2019). These guidelines should help the user in the interaction with the AI system and ultimately make the system more transparent. The chosen examples are somewhat in spirit similar to the third principle of the WCAG 2.1 guidelines: making systems understandable (WCAG 2018). Where the two sets of guidelines are primarily different is in the field of the learning system and expectation for the user to ‘teach’ the system (i.e., guidelines 7, 8, 9, 12 & 13).

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