

Practical Lab – 6

User Experience Evaluation

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Heuristic Evaluation of Netflix Website

Negative Heuristic

Introduction:

Netflix is a popular streaming service with a wide range of award-winning TV series, movies, animation, documentaries, and other content. Using the ten heuristic evaluation patterns covered in the course, this paper presents a heuristic evaluation of the Netflix website.

1. Slow Loading of Content

Problem:

Long loading times are a common issue for users trying to access Netflix's content. The interruption caused by this delay can cause users to become dissatisfied.

Failed Heuristics:

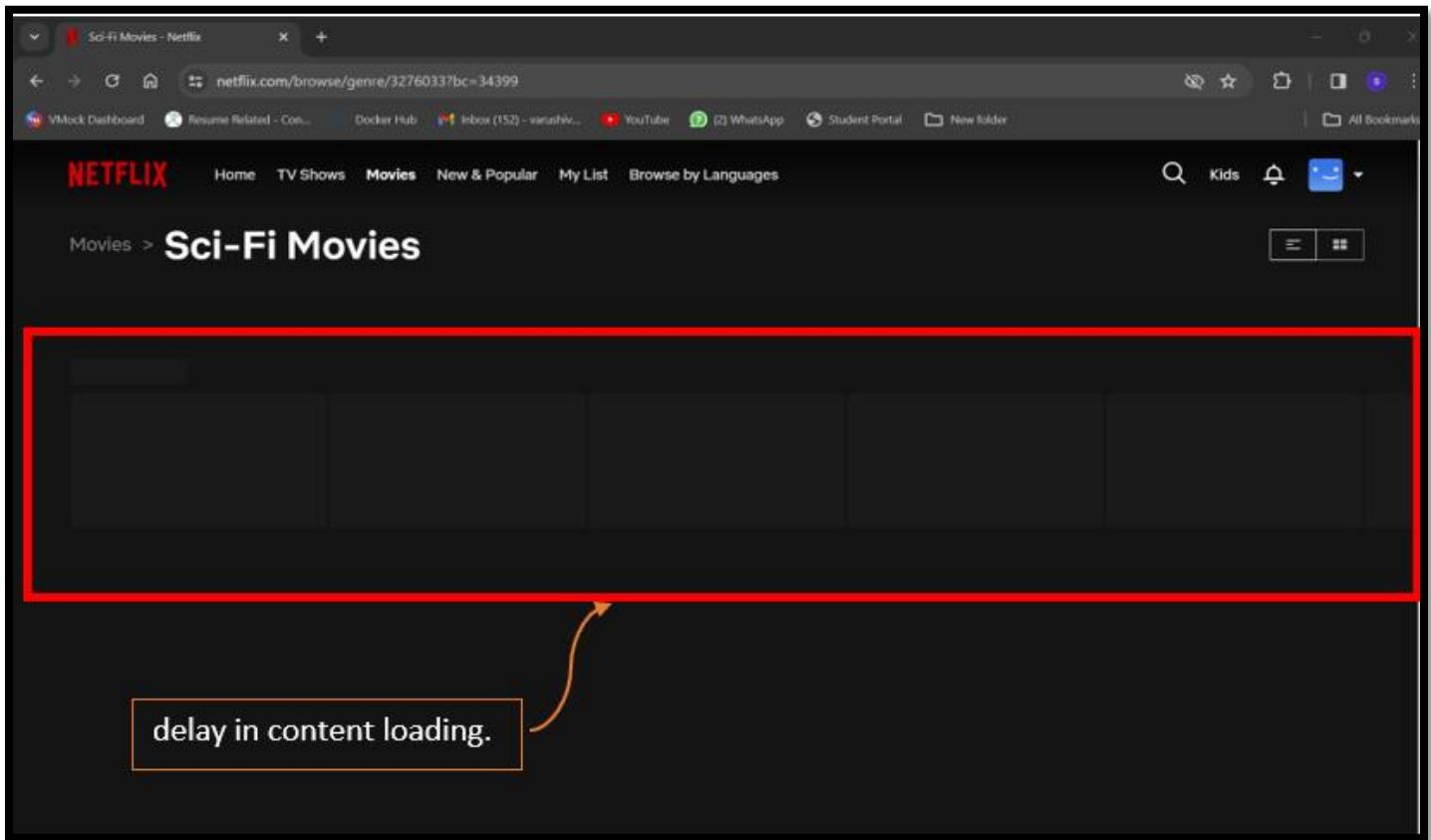
1. Visibility of System Status:

- Netflix fails to properly notify users of the system's status when there are lengthy loading times.
- It is unknown to users whether server problems, internet connection problems, or other factors are responsible for the delay.
- Users become frustrated and unsure about when they should expect the content to load due to this lack of clear feedback.

2. Flexibility and Efficiency of Use:

- Netflix viewers' flexibility and efficiency are impacted by the delayed loading of videos.
- Users want to be able to access their favorite shows and movies with ease, but the lengthy loading times make this process challenging.
- Users must wait instead of being able to discover and enjoy content fast, which affects the application's overall usability.

Screenshot:



Solution:

- ⇒ Netflix should use clear loading status indications, such as spinners or progress bars, particularly during long wait times. The platform can control user expectations and reduce frustration by using eye-catching loading indicators or progress bars.
- ⇒ Netflix can improve user experience by improving video delivery and system status visibility.
- ⇒ To keep users informed about the loading process, Netflix should focus on providing clear and helpful feedback mechanisms.
- ⇒ Provide alternate activities or content recommendations during loading, like trivia quizzes or a glimpse at upcoming releases, to further reduce user irritation and improve the waiting experience.
- ⇒ Furthermore, by allowing users to modify their streaming experience, such as preloading content for offline viewing or changing playback settings to increase loading speed, Netflix could draw attention to the importance of user freedom and control.

2. Limited Customization Options for Subtitles

Problem:

Users are unable to personalize subtitles according to their preferences, such as adjusting font size, color, or style. This lack of customization options can hinder readability and overall viewing enjoyment, particularly for individuals with specific accessibility needs.

Failed Heuristics:

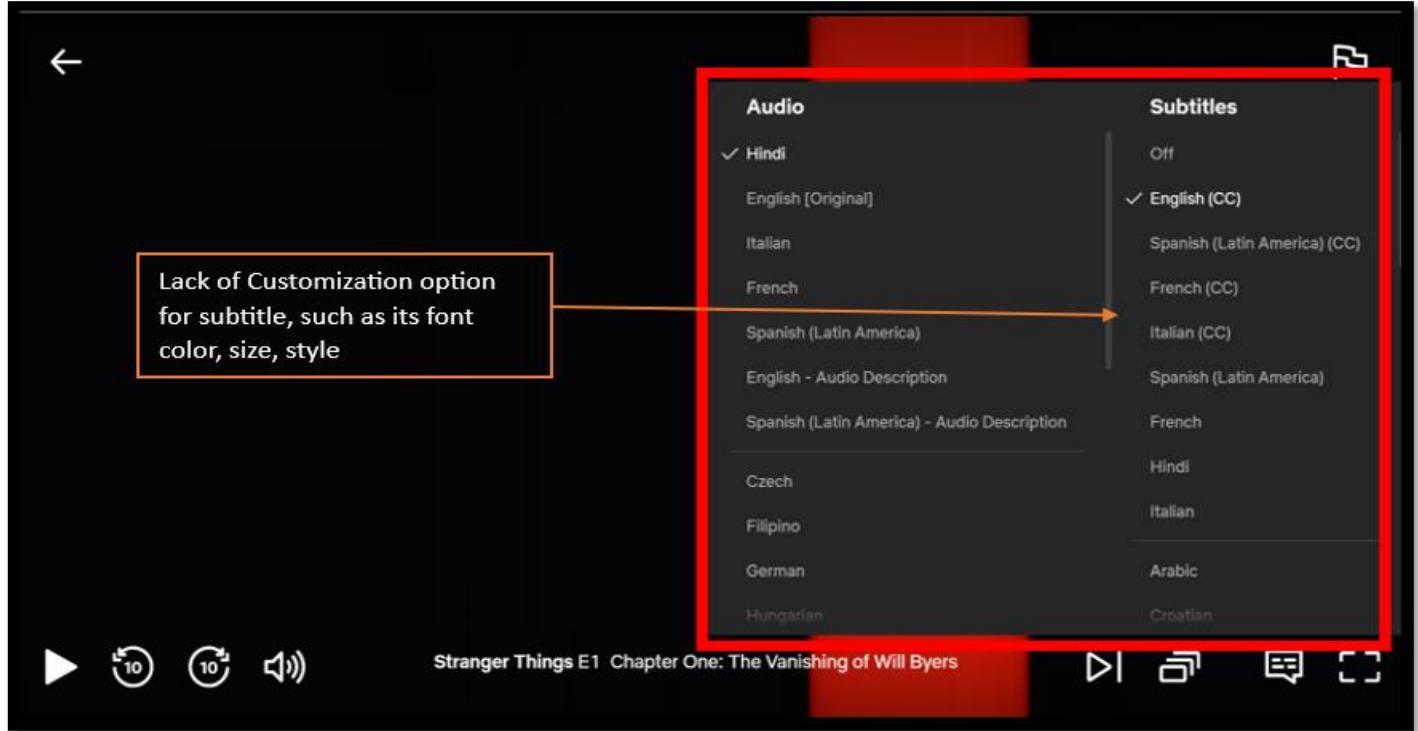
1. Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

- This heuristic shows how important it is to provide users with the option to modify the application according to their needs and preferences to improve the user experience.
- Users are unable to change the subtitles' font size, color, or style to suit their tastes due to Netflix's restricted subtitle customization capabilities. This lack of flexibility affects users' ability to use the application effectively, negatively impacting the video's readability and overall satisfaction, particularly for those with specific needs who might need to modify the subtitle settings.
- Since users are not allowed enough freedom to alter the program according to their preferences, there is a violation because this has a negative effect on the effectiveness and usability of the application.

2. User Control and Freedom:

- This heuristic shows the importance of providing viewers freedom over their interactions and the ability to personalize their experience according to their preferences.
- Users are unable to customize subtitles according to their requirements and preferences because Netflix does not offer a wide variety of options for changing subtitles.
- Users may become frustrated and dissatisfied if they are unable to personalize their viewing experience due to a lack of subtitle adjusting controls.
- As a result, by providing insufficient user control and freedom in subtitle customization, Netflix violates this heuristic, affecting the whole user experience.

Screenshot:



Solutions:

- ⇒ Netflix should provide comprehensive customization options that let users change the font's size, color, style, and position according to their preferences and improve readability.
- ⇒ Ensure that users can easily access and alter subtitle modification options by creating an accessible settings menu with clear names, visual indications, and simple navigation paths.
- ⇒ Real-time preview functionality enables users to make informed choices by allowing them to check out modifications before applying them.
- ⇒ It also ensures consistency in the viewing experience when users can save and synchronize their choices across devices.
- ⇒ Accessibility options like high contrast color schemes and customizable fonts are given preference, which improves accessibility.

3. Lack of Confirmation Dialog for Adding/Removing Content to Watchlist

Problem:

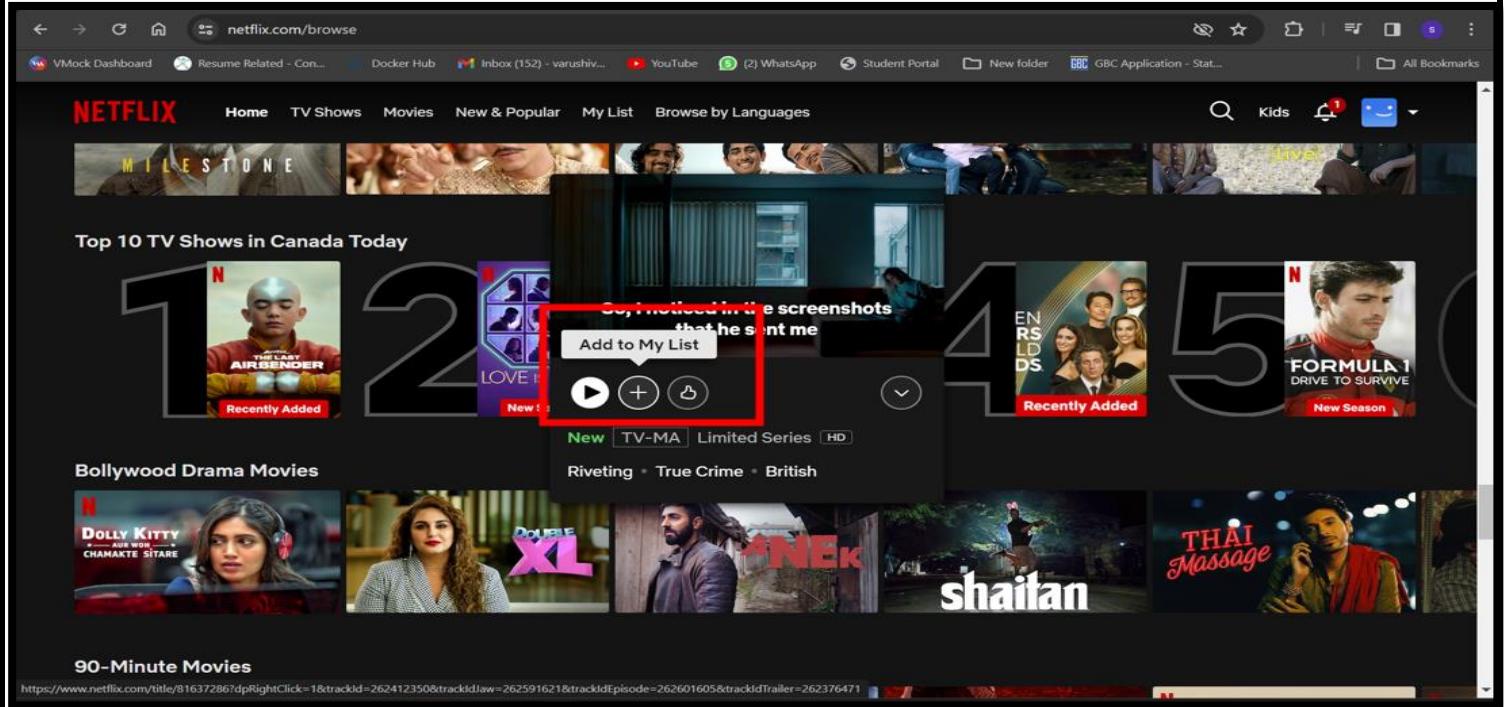
Netflix does not provide confirmation dialogues when users add or remove items from their watchlist, increasing the possibility of unintentional actions and mistakes made by users. Users get irritated and unsatisfied when mistakes cannot be prevented.

Failed Heuristics:

1. Preventing errors

- This heuristic highlights how important it is to have apps in place to stop errors from occurring and minimize the impact of mistakes made by users.
- The lack of error prevention features in Netflix's policy regarding adding/removing content from the watchlist increases the possibility of user errors and unintentional actions.
- Users could be frustrated and disappointed if they mistakenly delete titles from their watchlist without realizing it, which could happen if there are no validation controls or confirmation dialogs.
- Netflix violates the error prevention heuristic by not providing effective error protection, resulting in poor user experience.

Screenshot:



Solutions:

- ⇒ It is recommended to include confirmation dialogues in the watchlist that ask users to verify their actions before making any additions or deletions. This reduces the risk of accidental actions and user errors.
- ⇒ Provide a way for users to quickly reverse any unauthorized changes they may have made to their watchlist by including an undo feature.
- ⇒ Providing visual feedback, such as animations or color changes, helps user understanding and confidence.
- ⇒ provides a settings option that allows users to adjust their confirmation choices according to their preferences, to ensure they get what they want.
- ⇒ Tooltips or in-app instructions can be used to educate users on the existence and benefits of confirmation dialogues. Users will become more aware of this and continue to use it.

3. Distraction from Video Player Controls on Netflix

Problem:

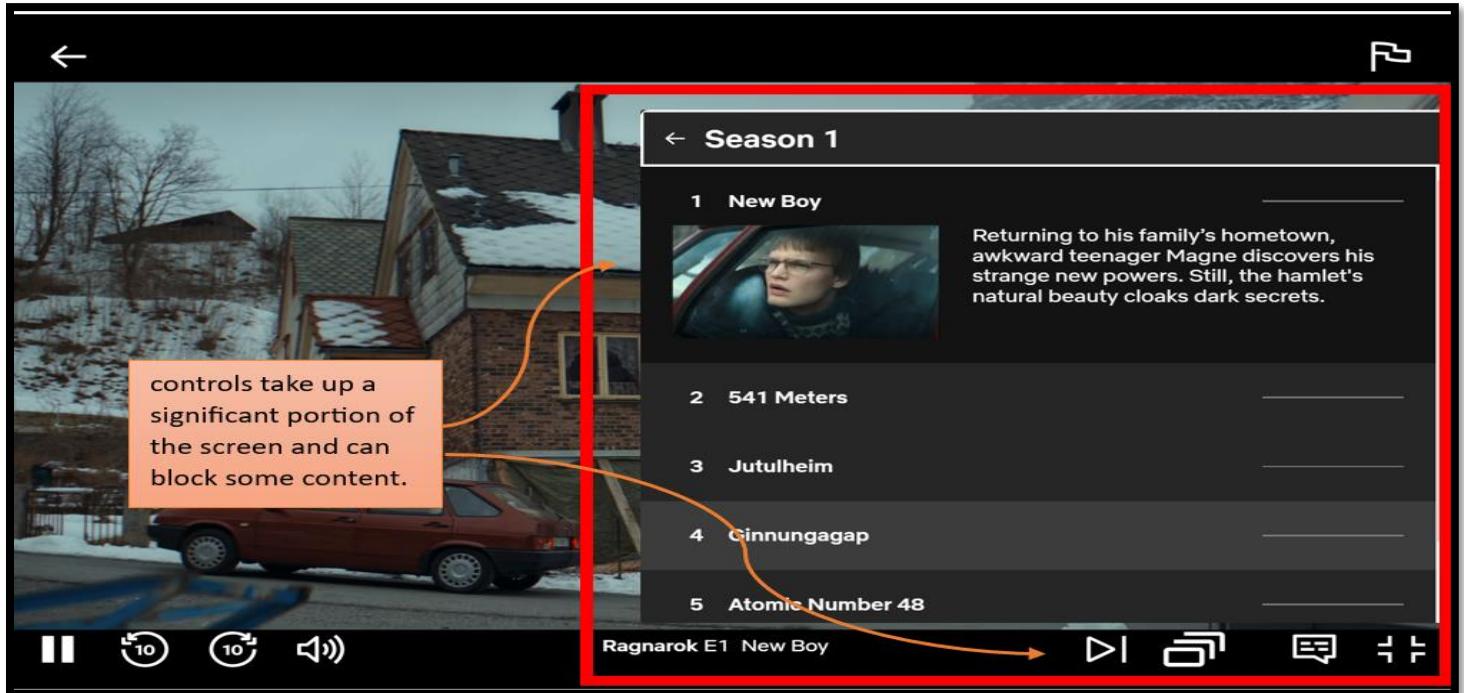
The video player's large control bar, including play/pause, volume control, subtitle, and audio settings, and the 'next episode' button, can be distracting and block content, especially for smaller screen viewers, due to its size and design.

Failed Heuristics:

1. Aesthetic and Minimalist Design:

- The current design of the video player controls on Netflix violates the heuristic of aesthetic and minimalist design.
- When a user hovers their mouse over the video player, a large control bar displays at the bottom of the screen.
- The play/pause, fast-forward/rewind, volume control, audio settings, subtitle, and "next episode" buttons are all located on this control bar.
- Even while these controls are necessary, the way they currently look and feel can be frustrating, particularly if the user is trying to view a video.

Screenshot



Solutions:

- ⇒ Netflix can reduce the size of video player controls to create a more minimalist design style.
- ⇒ Streamline the control bar layout and reduce button visibility.
- ⇒ To improve the viewing experience, controls can be modified smaller to minimize their visual impact.
- ⇒ Netflix can reduce distraction while retaining efficiency by modifying the opacity of its control bar.
- ⇒ To improve the design, the controls can be automatically hidden while not in use and displayed only when the user interacts with the video stream. This technique keeps controls available when needed.

5. Lack of remembering user's recent searches

Problem:

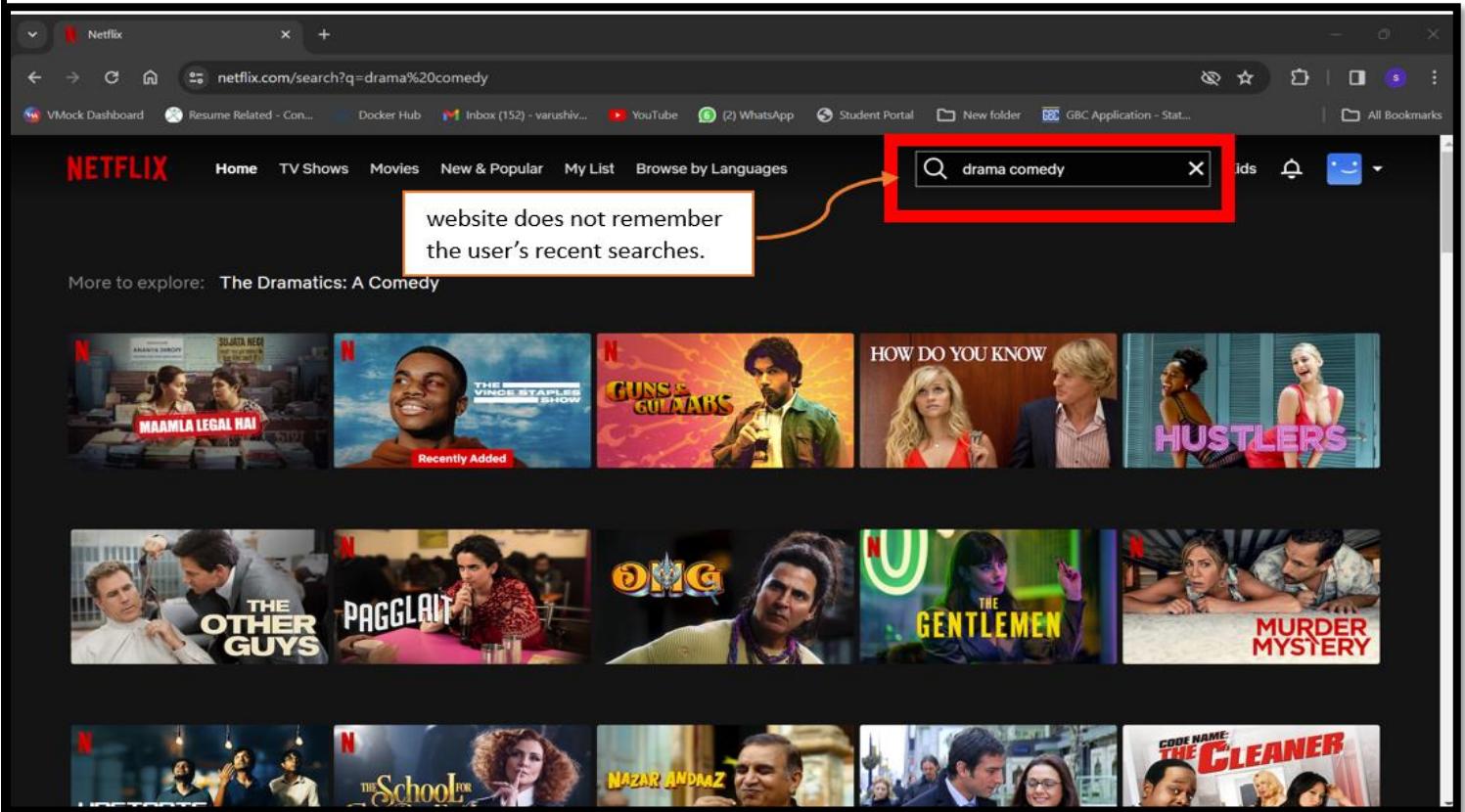
The website requires users to retype their search term when leaving or returning to a specific title because it does not remember previous searches.

Failed Heuristics:

1. Recognition Rather Than Recall

- Netflix's search functionality violates the heuristic of "Recognition Rather Than Recall".
- Currently, when a user searches for a certain title, then leaves and returns to the search page, they must retype the search keyword.
- The user must remember the exact title they were looking for because the website does not remember their previous searches.
- This goes against the recognition principle, which states that users should not have to remember items from memory when they can recognize them from a list or menu.

Screenshot:



Solutions:

- ⇒ Netflix should introduce a 'Recently Searched' list that shows when a user clicks the search bar to solve this problem and enhance the user experience.
- ⇒ Users would have access to a recognition-based display instead of one that depends on memory, as this list could show the titles of films or television shows for which they had recently searched.
- ⇒ Netflix would effectively reduce the mental strain on the user by implementing this function, improving the user interface's usability and ease of use.
- ⇒ The 'Recently Searched' list would make it necessary for users to remember the specific titles in which they were interested.
- ⇒ This improvement would especially help users looking to revisit titles they find interesting or explore other content options, which would eventually increase user satisfaction with Netflix.