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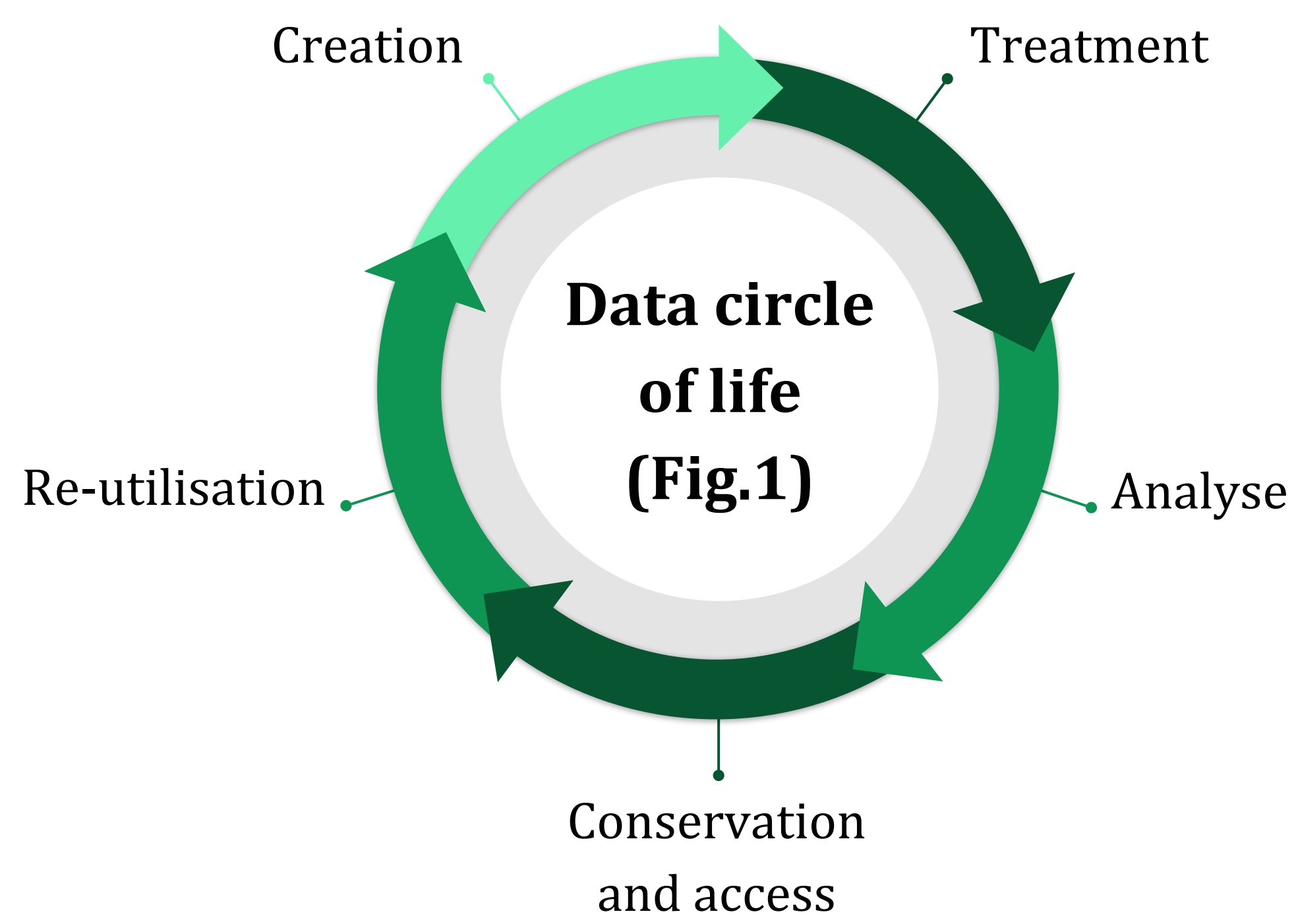
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Archeology research databases: how are the user communities articulated ?

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Context and objectives

As open science grows, the management of research data is not standardized. The archaeological community tends to take over more and more the relational databases and is now collecting natively digital data. Using the methods of socio-anthropology, the purpose of this study is to understand the obstacles to the sharing of scientific information in the use of databases among researchers and with archeologists. For this purpose, the structuring of research communities is analyzed at different levels, individual, collaborative and institutional, in terms of disciplines and professionals, designer and user. These interactions generate friction (Vinck, 2009), translated into negotiations, thus allowing the production of new knowledge.

Fields and Methods

The ethnographic study focuses on the design of four database projects on ancient materials (Fig. 2).

Fig. 3: A screenshot of a database interface, printed and corrected

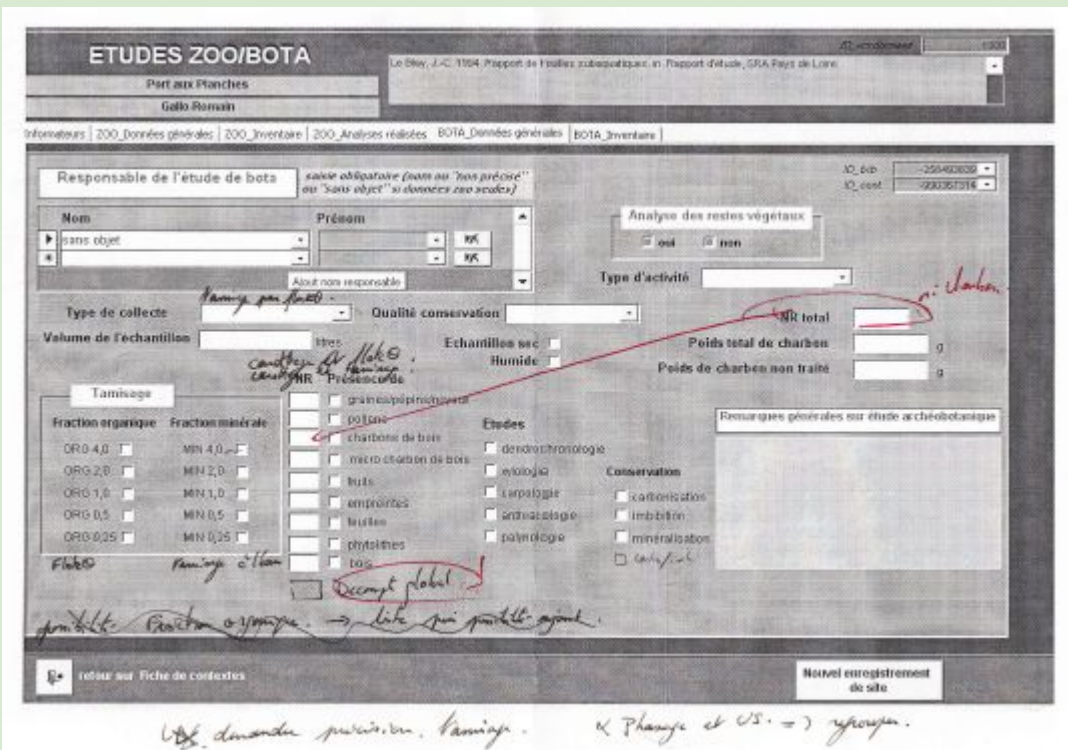
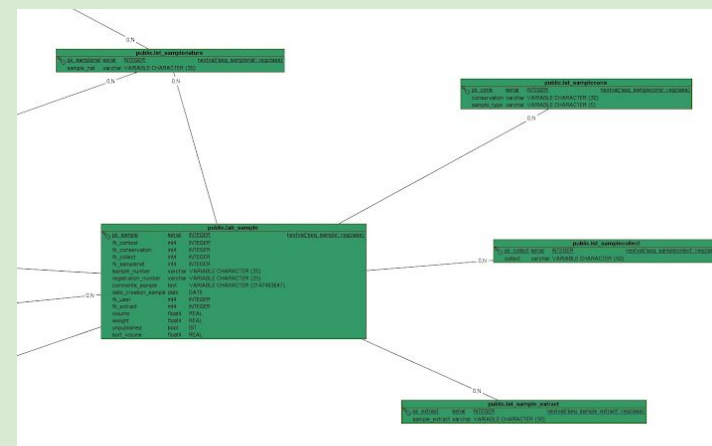


Fig. 2: Schéma logique de la base de données « Kharman »



Interviews and observations are conducted in the different communities, and grapho-numeric objects (Fig. 3), understood as intermediate objects, are also collected.

Research questions

How does the database object articulate the different communities? What are the nature and the consequences of the frictions thus created?

How the representations around the object are in conflict? About what and how are the actors negotiating? Is the production of knowledge thanks to the database effective?

Structuring of communities on the chaîne opératoire of databases

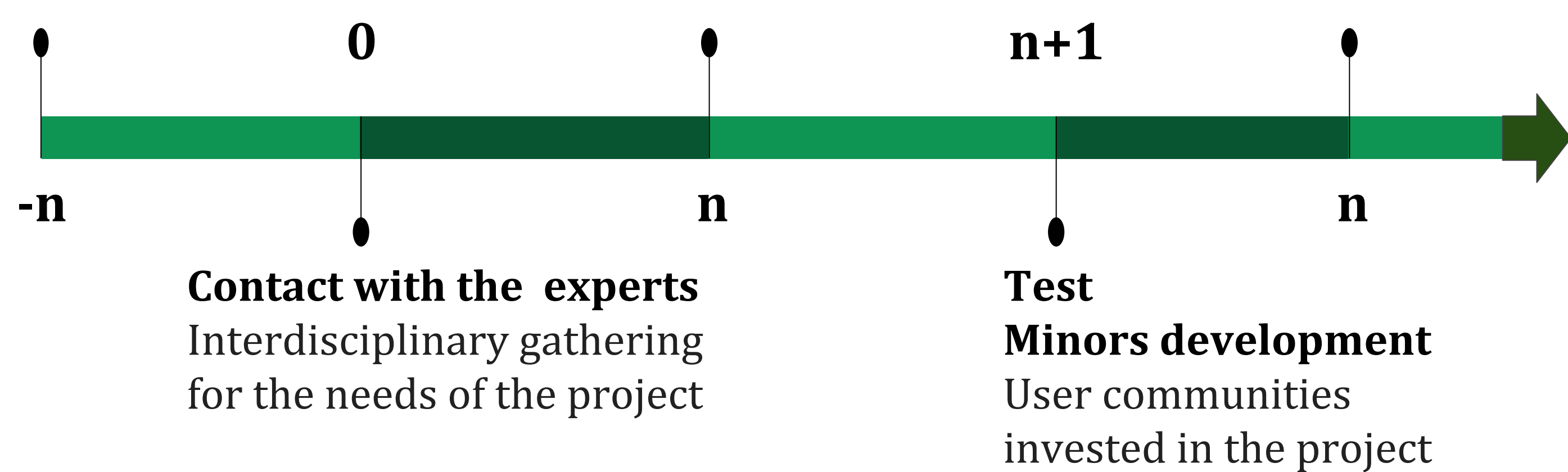
Emergence of need

Individual / disciplinary / institutional issues

Database modelisation, software development
 Work groups

Utilisation - Incrementation - Re-utilisation

Enlarged community structured in its practice
 Restricted communities
 Community unchanged



Characterization of the databases

1	The data, contained and structured	Data volume, origin discipline, scale of data collection
2	Assembly and technical maintenance	Number of administrators, original development or not, resumption or not of the structure
3	Scope / dissemination	Number of users, diversity of their location, actions taken (visualization or incrementation), software accessibility, disciplinary diversity
4	Lifetime	Persistence over time: active life or ghost life? Context of creation and evolution
5	Financing methods	Type of financing Actors contract

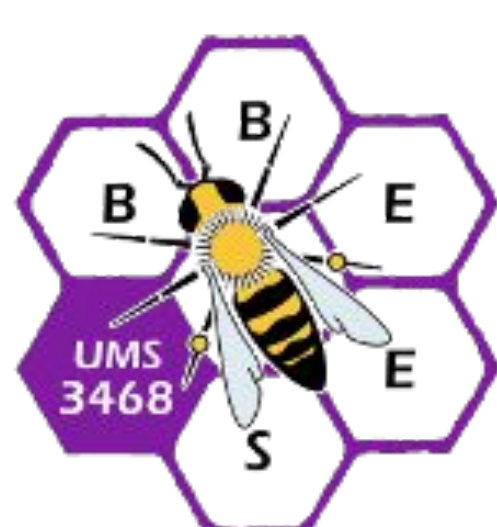
Data quality
Database attractivity

Results

At this point, we found that interdisciplinary collaborations were less important after the creation of the database. If the database delimits the action of its users, the sharing of data depends on individual wishes. We observed that the dialogue between engineers and researchers is considered a key element and that the transmission of skills is partial.

Discussion and conclusion

There is no simple reproducibility when creating a search database. It is therefore difficult to predict its acceptability. Financing remains, however, the crucial point for ensuring the sustainability and development of a database. The design process is still not yet recognized fully as a scientific activity.



Bibliography

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DIM
BBES