

Beyond energy

when software makes hardware obsolete

And other designerly approaches

Aurélien Tabard - Université Lyon 1 & Inria Lille - 5/04/2023

Digital Limits

Digital Limits is a design research project on the environmental footprint of digital technology. We are interested in the design choices, uses and functions of digital technology within planetary boundaries. What are the environmental impacts of digital technology and how can they be reduced? What do digital forms, uses and techniques look like in an ecologically constrained world? What are the effects on our jobs, our lives, our society?



Our work

In french

The newsletter →

A newsletter sharing updates about the project, research in various domains related to digital limits, from design, to repair and e-waste, but also fresh news on those topics.

Alter-design of interfaces →

An exploratory work to rethink the forms of an ecologically constrained digital world.

Ideas for an eco web browser →

A prospective work for an ecological practice in a web browser.

Smartphone software obsolescence →

An investigation on how software obsolescence affects smartphone renewal. How do people cope with obsolescence,

Survey of smartphone parameters →

A survey and idea notebooks on how mobile applications allow us or not, to have control over what they calculate, the data they send or the orientation of our uses? And how in fine to cultivate a more ecological practice of digital?

Motivation

See Aurélie's keynote

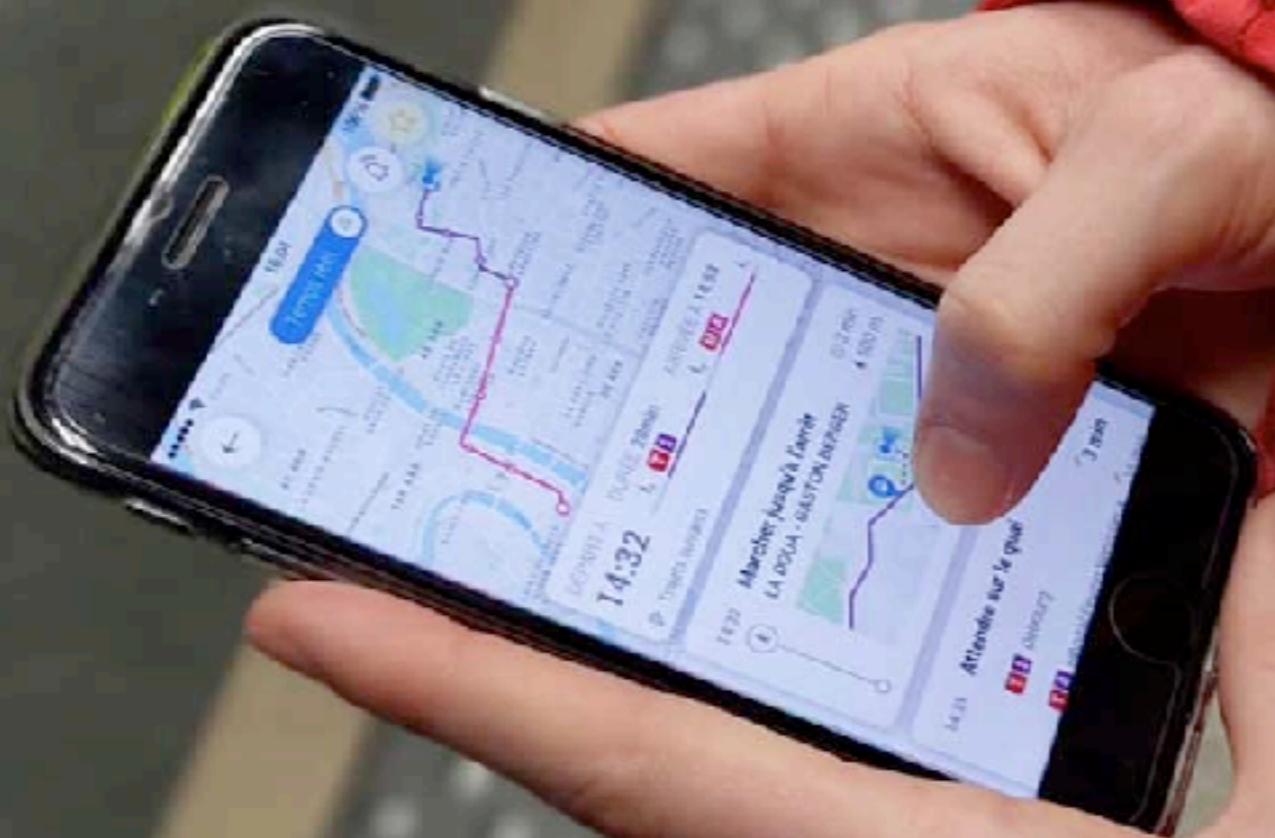
Understanding practices for design

For devices to last longer

Problems in transit wayfinding

Screen-recording + First person point of view

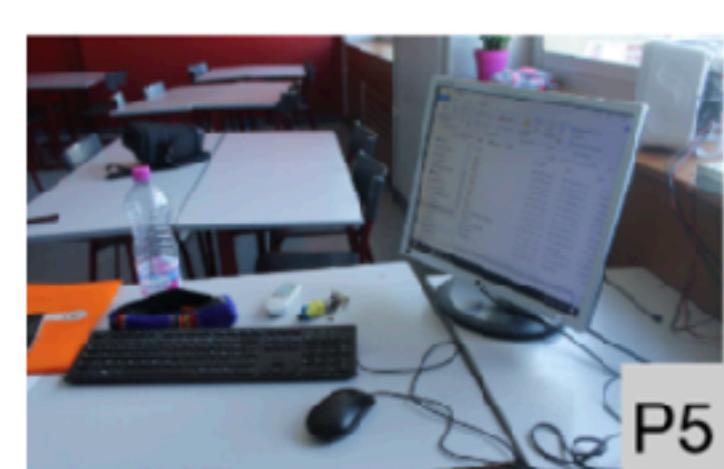
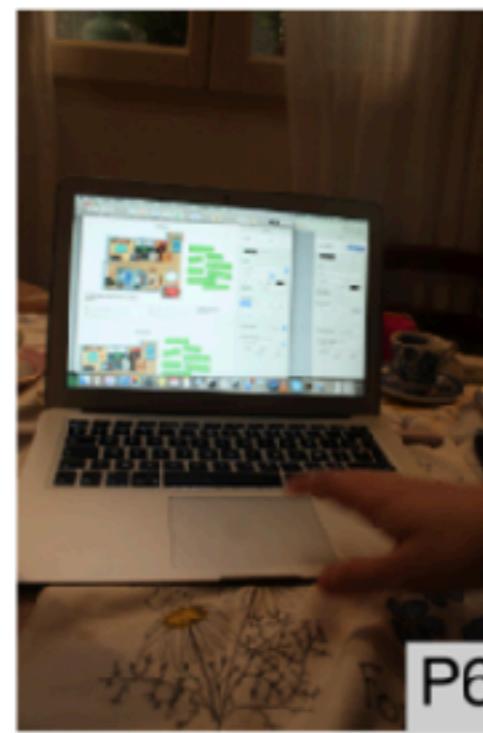
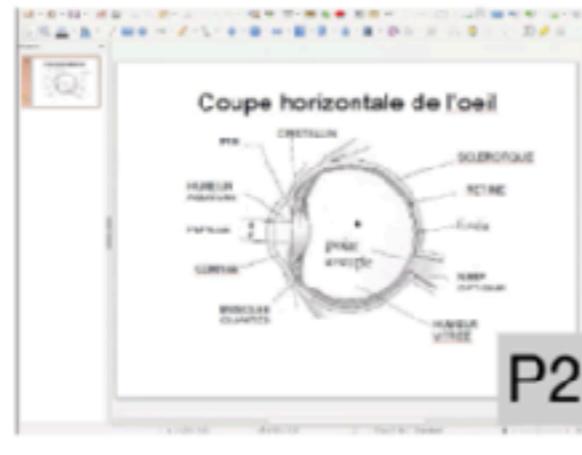
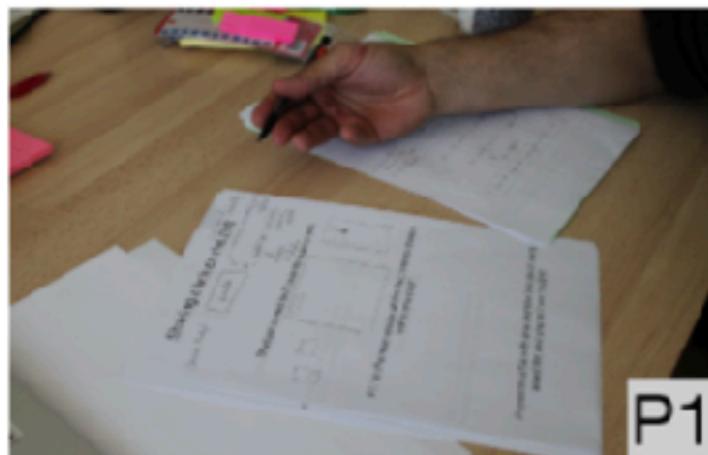




En Route! Wayfinding for aging phones

Digital activities in high-schools

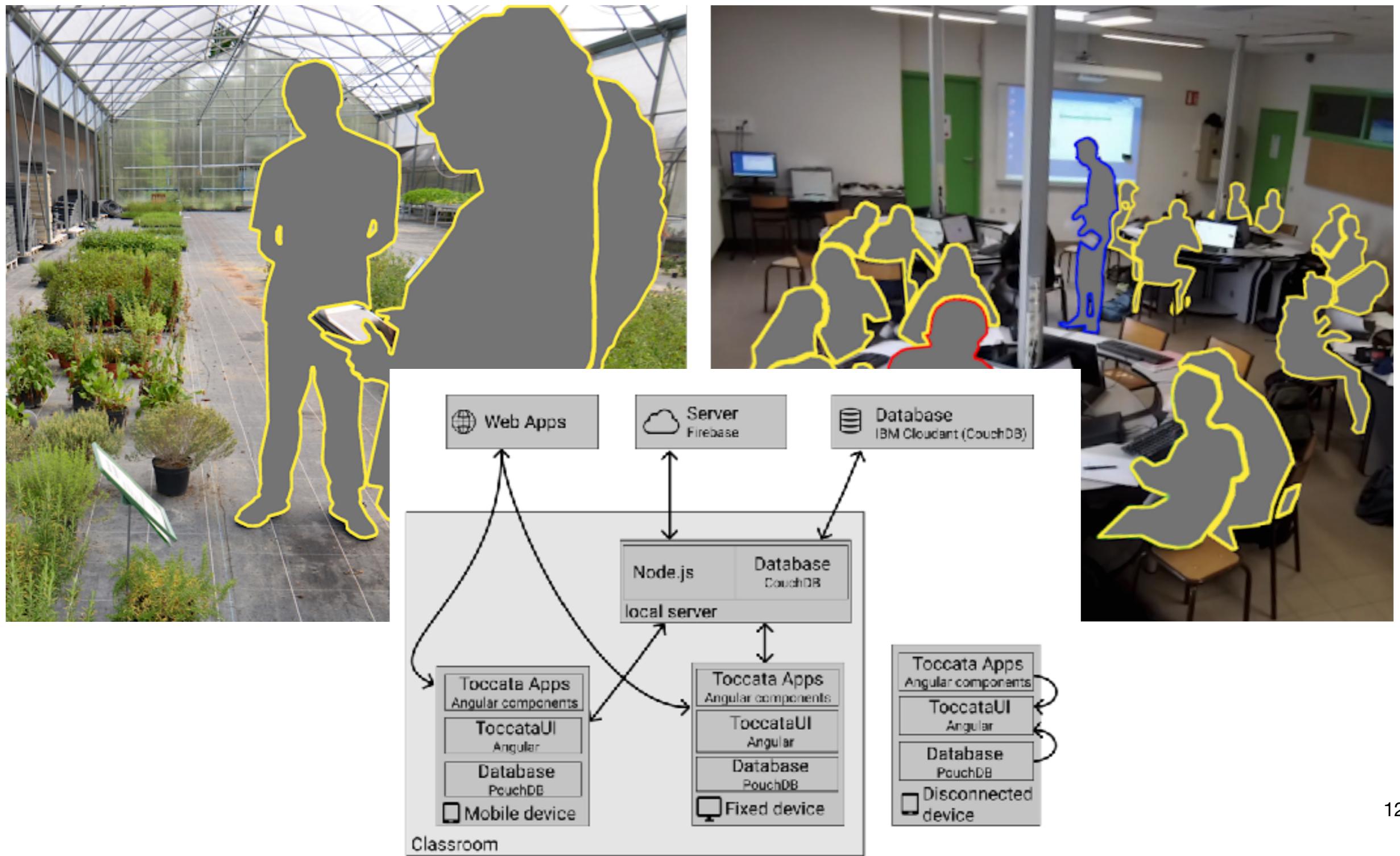
Breakdowns and bright spots



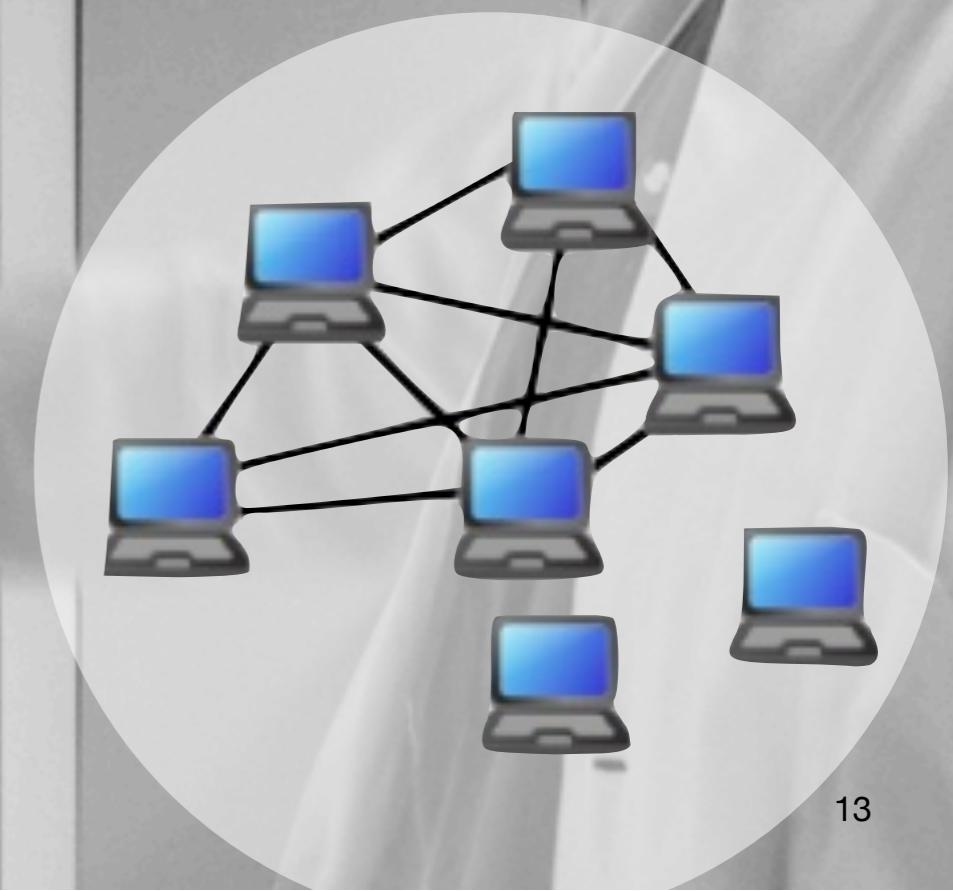
Ghita Jalal, Valentin Lachand, Aurélien Tabard, Christine Michel. *How teachers prepare for the unexpected: bright spots and breakdowns in enacting pedagogical plans in class.* In Proc. of 13th European Conference on Technology Enhanced Learning (EC-TEL 2018), Leeds, United Kingdom.

Toccata

A resilient activity-centric architecture for schools



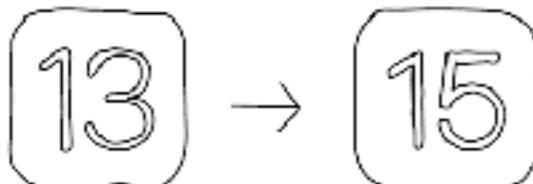
Minigrid : a communal p2p grid of old PCs



Smartphone obsolescence

Understanding the experience of obsolescence

*Je suis passée de iOS13 à iOS15, ça
hui a fait peut-être une grosse claque
d'un coup, mais au début ça allait bien*



*Pis là ça fait quelques
semaines y'a un truc trop
bizarre qui se passe*

*Le téléphone devait être tellement
vieux – enfin, abîmé, les apps
buggaien, mais en fait c'était tout le
téléphone qui buggait.*



*C'est avec le temps
qu'il est plus lent.*

*Je pense que c'est à cause des apps
de merde, des sites un peu merdiques
où t'es spammée de pubs.*

*Aussi les mises à jour,
et juste le téléphone est
pas de bonne qualité.*

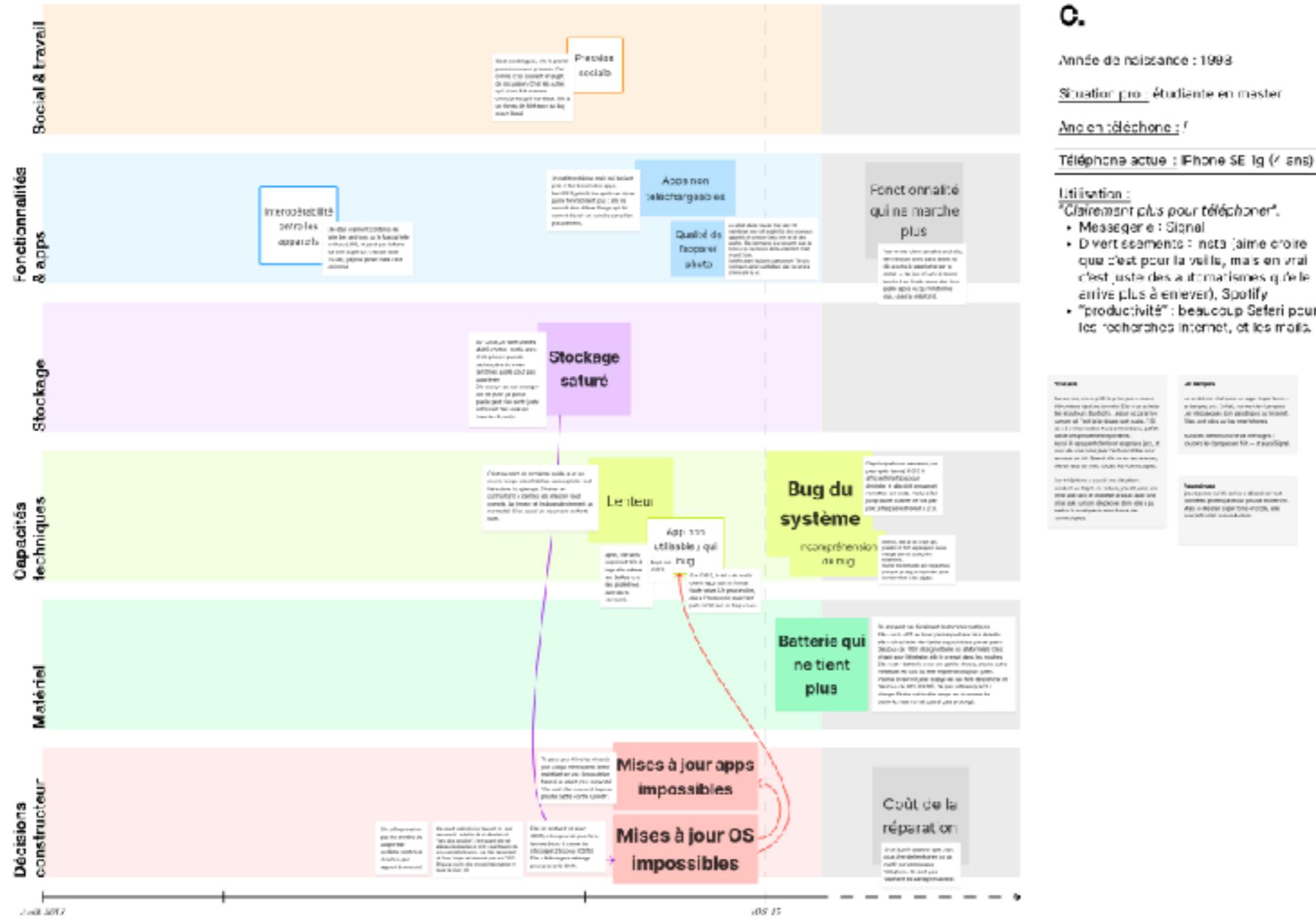
*Ils font exprès de rendre leur téléphone
obsolète pour acheter le prochain qui sort.*

*Déjà c'était sur ma to-do list
depuis 1 an, vraiment, de faire de
la place sur mon téléphone et de le
mettre à jour.*



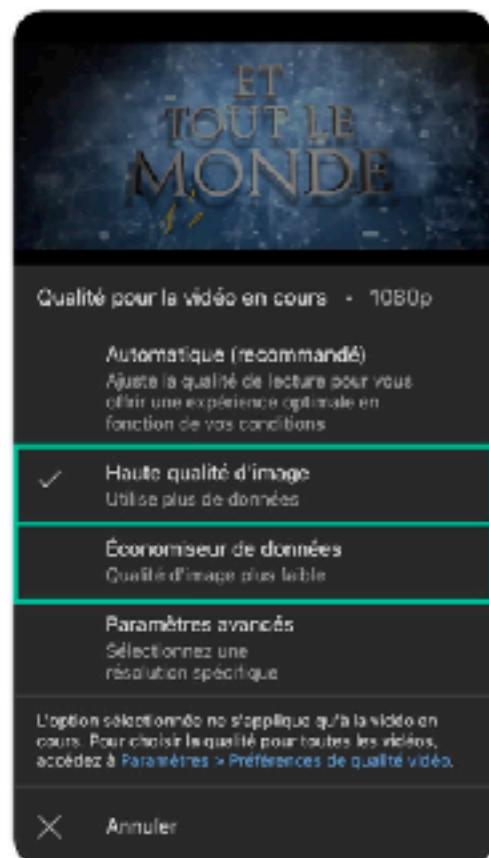
Living with aging devices

Chokepoints and thresholds triggering renewal



Designing parameters

<https://limitesnumeriques.fr/travaux-productions/enquete-parametres-mobiles/insoucis-ecologique>



Afficher des définitions plus élevées
Seuls certains appareils peuvent lire des
vidéos 2K/4K

Youtube

Peertube



Thomas THIBAULT

Concevoir des paramètres
écologiques dans les
applications



Conclusion

Energy, manufacturing and other challenges

Tying field work to design

- ▶ Digital experiences are fragile
- ▶ People live with broken devices
- ▶ Devices are rarely function at their full potential
- ▶ Digital infrastructures require active maintenance
- ▶ Social pressure make those breakdowns unacceptable

Rather than starting from calls for self-imposed limits (*sobriété*). There is a space of positive re-design around limits from the ones experienced everyday.

What to do from these results ?

- ▶ Re-framing (less focus on energy)
 - ▶ Explorign alternative design practices
 - ▶ Computational alternatives & design fiction
 - ▶ Design for regulation
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- ▶ Sharing back through other publication means