

# The use and re-use of digital resources in language teaching – a case-study

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### **Outline**



- Background
- Research questions
- Use and re-use of OERs
- Materials adaptation
- Methodology
- Findings
- Summary of findings
- Recommendations
- Further research

### Languages at The Open University



- Distance learning: 7 languages
- Course developers
- Associate Lecturers
- Blended tuition (face-to-face/online tutorials)
- OERs for synchronous online tutorials



### LORO – http://loro.open.ac.uk

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#### Welcome to LORO

LORO contains resources for language teaching available to download and reuse, including those used by the Department of Languages at the Open University, UK.

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#### Featured Resources



Three mouths and five legs (Resource)

Learning/Revising basic vocabulary related to parts of the body and numbers: Introduction to plural

Added On: 05 May 2011 11:14 Added By: Ms Daniela

Tags: Performing Languages, Drama, Languages Through

Cesana

Drama, Featured Language: Any Language Course Code: Unspecified Unit: Unspecified



To relax learners and | Tags: Performing make them feel at ease. To improve oral Language, Non Verbal

The Readiness for | Added On: 28 Apr 2011 learning (Resource) Added By: Leire Payo Peña Languages, Drama, Body

#### Peer review: adding a comment to a resource

Calling all users to review the resources in LORO.

The Featured Resources on the left are activities on the use of drama techniques for language teaching, and the colleagues who have written them would like to know what you think. Whether you try them out with your own students or simply have a look at them for inspiration, please leave a comment for the author with your feedback and suggestions.

Remember to log in to your LORO account so that you can access the comments feature. If you don't have a LORO account, sign up for one here.

#### Get in touch with the LORO Team

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about LORO, send them to FELS-Repository@open.ac.uk



### LORO - http://loro.open.ac.uk



### French beginners: Bon départ

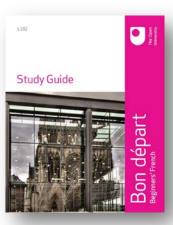


- Second edition October 2012
- Reconstructed syllabus
- New materials to fit the new syllabus









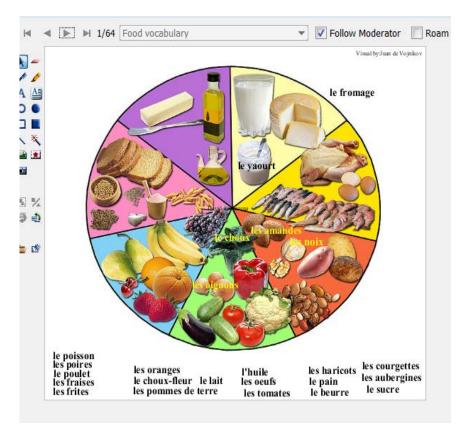
### Material design – our approach

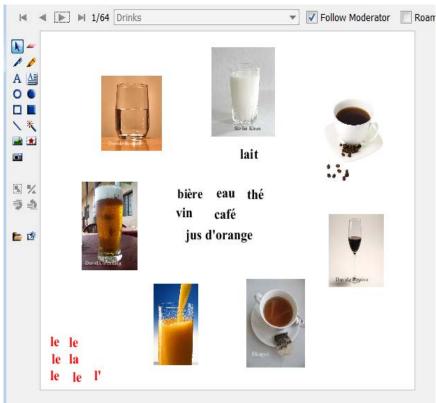


- OERs for language teaching:
  - -Accessible
  - Interactive
  - Adaptable
  - -Reusable
  - -Objective-based
  - -Staged interactive activities
  - -Teaching guidelines
  - Copyrights clear

### Activating vocabulary

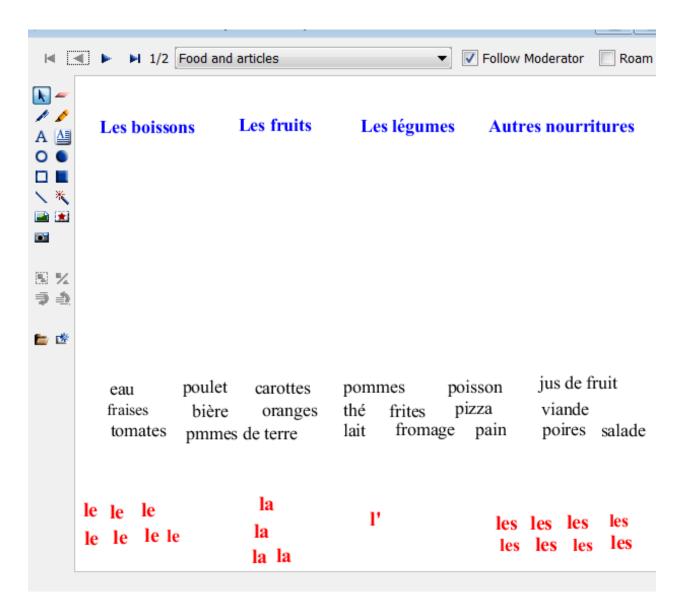






### Activating vocabulary and grammar

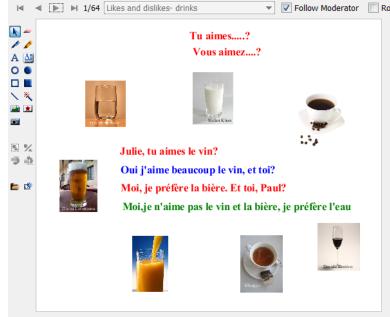




### Progression to controlled practice







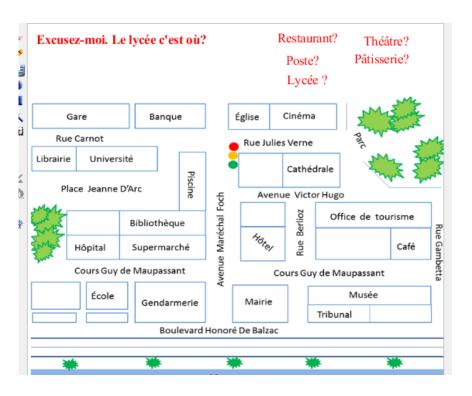
### Freer practice

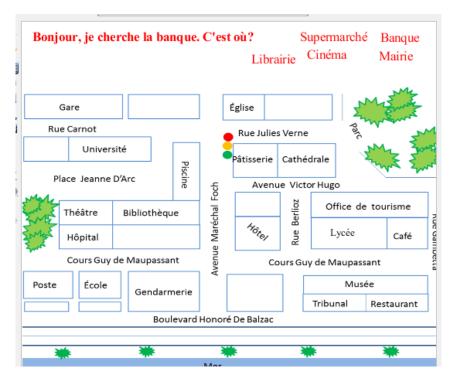




### Information gaps

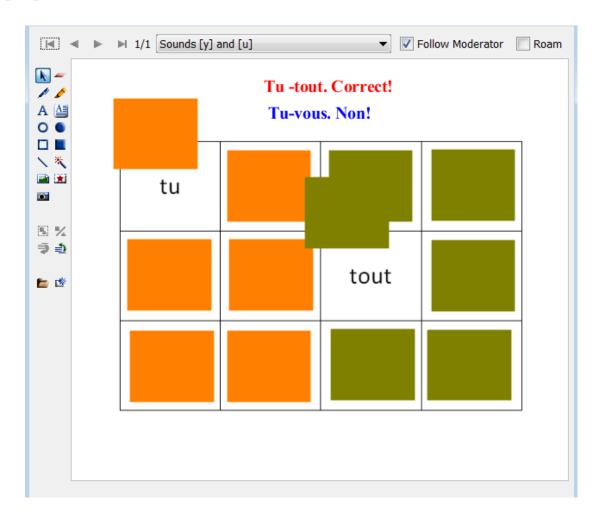






### Games





### Research questions



- •What proportion of the new resources was used/re-used?
- Which criteria did tutors apply when selecting a resource?
- •Were the resources used in their original form or adapted?
- •If they were adapted, how and why?

### Use and re-use of OERs



- OERs in language teaching
- Recent research and surveys show that OERs are used but what is difficult to assess is how
- 'Invisible re-use and sharing' (Beaven, 2013)

### Materials evaluation



'... the starting point for any evaluation should be the reflection on the evaluator's practice leading to articulation of the evaluator's theories of learning and teaching'.

Tomlinson (2003, p.18)

### Materials adaptation



"Effective adaptation is a matter of achieving 'congruence'... The good teacher is ... constantly striving for congruence among several related variables: teaching materials, methodology, students, course objectives, the target language and its context, and the teacher's own personality and teaching style".

Madsen and Bowen (1978) in Tomlinson (2012)

### Materials adaptation



#### Four selective processes:

- Selection
- Rejection
- Adding
- Changing

(McGrath, 2002)



### Material adaptation

- McGrath focuses on the two main categories of adaptation:
  - Adaptation as addition (teachers provide additional examples, additional explanations, additional exercises = more of the same; further exploitation of materials)
  - Adaptation as change (it is a recognition that an activity does not do what it was intended to do, or does not do it as effectively or as efficiently or as interestingly as it might)

### Techniques for adaptation



Ellis (1986) suggested that: "Every teacher is in a very real sense an adapter of the material he/she uses', employing 'one or more of a number of techniques: supplementing, editing, expanding, personalising, simplifying, modernising, localising, or modifying cultural/situational content".

McDonough and Shaw (1993) and Cunningsworth (1995) talk about *techniques* that may be used when adapting materials:

- Adding: extending and expanding
- Deleting: subtracting and abridging
- Simplifying
- Reordering
- Replacing

### Methodology

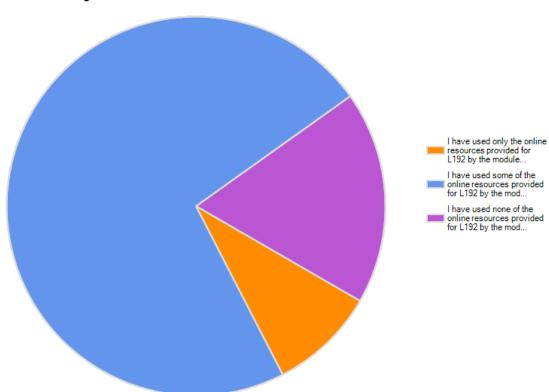


- Online questionnaire to 32 tutors (new course)
  - 11 respondents
  - use and reuse of new materials
  - reasons for using/criteria
  - whether they used as is or adapted
  - seeking volunteers for interviews
- Semi-structured interviews online (Elluminate)
  - 7 volunteers at the end of questionnaire
  - 4 made themselves known
  - general use of resources/LORO
  - language teaching approach
  - examples of resources used/adapted





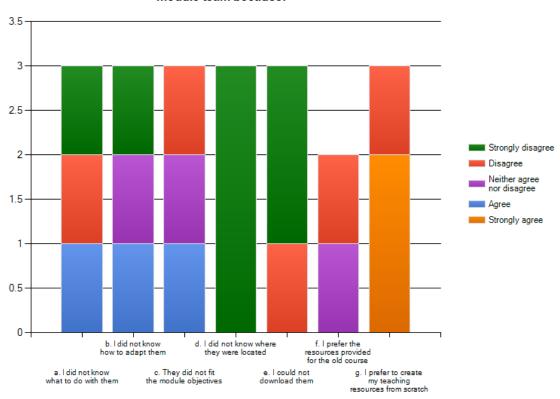
1. Which of the following best describes your choices of resources at this stage of the module?In the tutorials I have run so far:







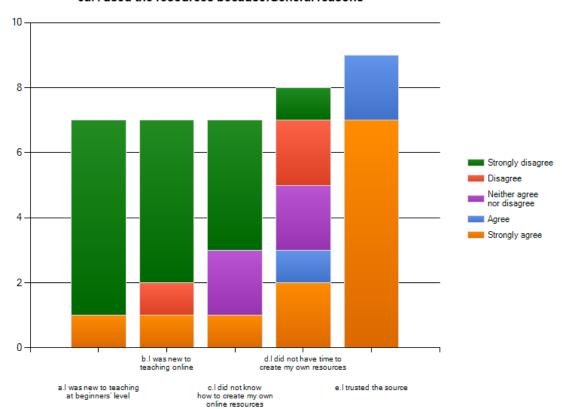
#### 2. I used none of the online resources provided for L192 by the module team because:







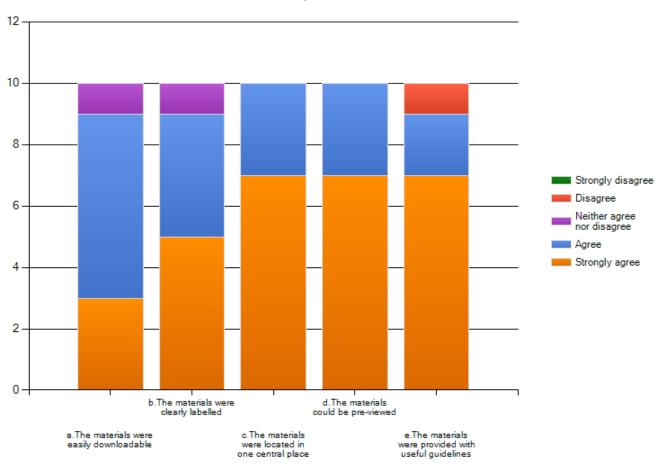
#### 3a. I used the resources because: General reasons







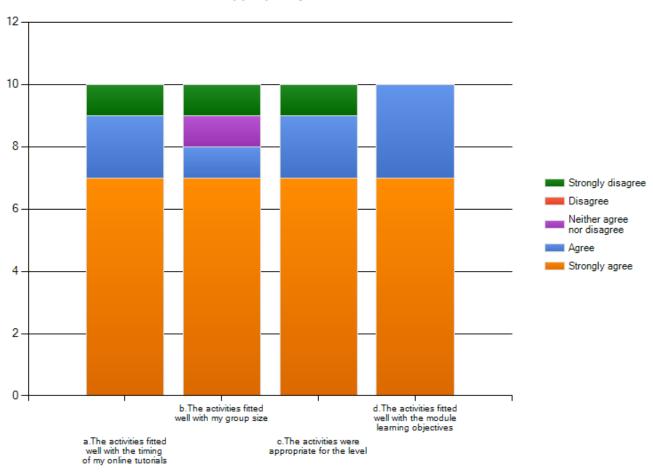
#### 3b. Accessibility







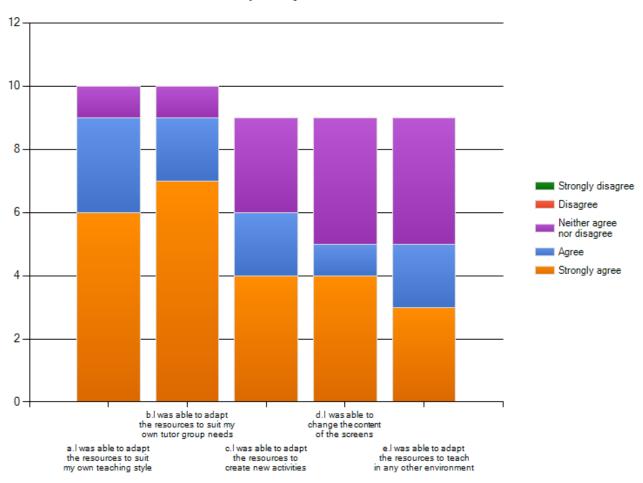
#### 3c. Appropriacy







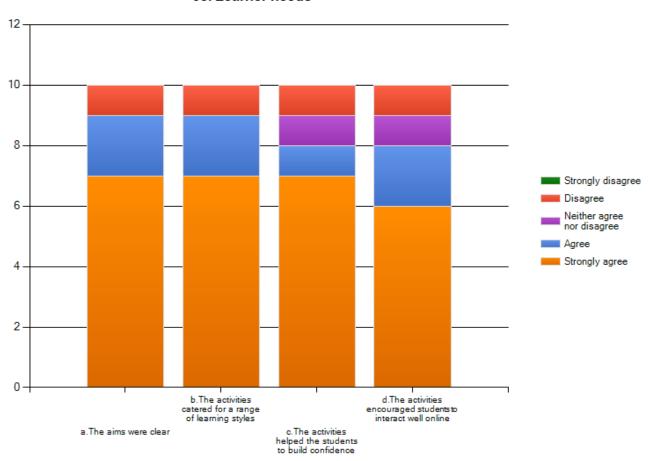
3d. Adaptability







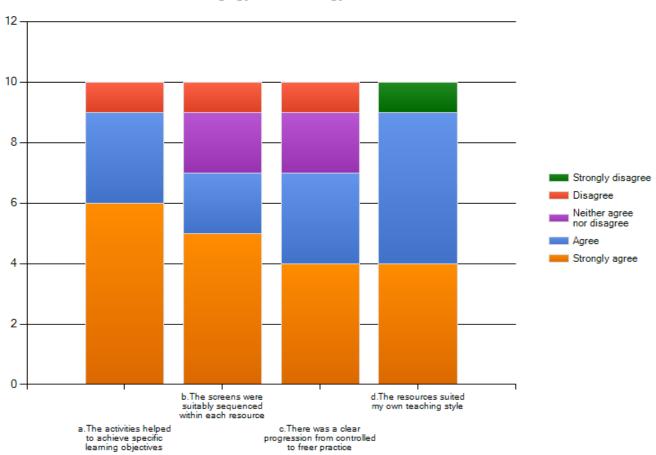
3e. Learner needs







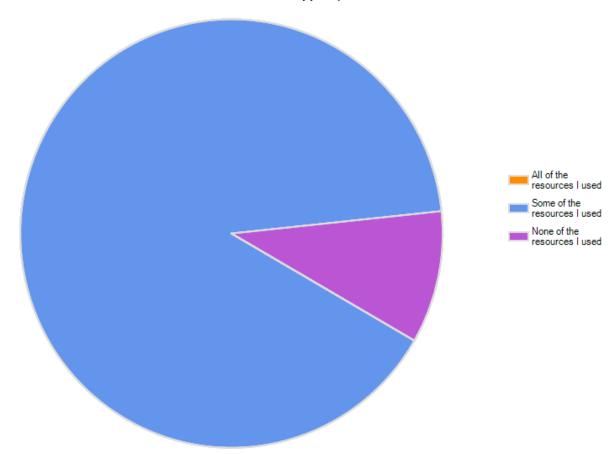
#### 3f. Pedagogy/methodology







5. In the tutorials I have run so far, I have adapted the whiteboards in: (please tick the statement which best applies)



### Findings – interviews



- All tutors are regular users of LORO
- Mainly to download resources for their course
- They sometimes browse in other OU resources
- They do not upload their own resources (IRP/time)
- They all adapt some of the resources they use
- They all seem to use a communicative approach in their tutorials
- They all agree that the resources are fit for purpose
- The guidelines for tutors were useful but not essential

### Techniques for adaptation



#### Mainly, the tutors:

- Added slides (supplementation/personalising)
- Added text on slides (supplementation/expanding)
- Changed the look (change/personalising/modifying culture)
- Changed the text (change/expanding)
- Changed the approach/the activities (expanding/personalising)



#### New slides







#### Used, added text and extended





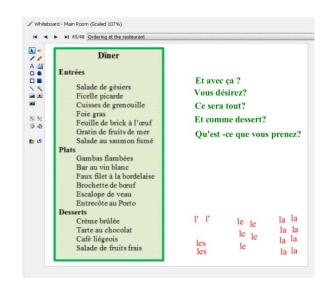




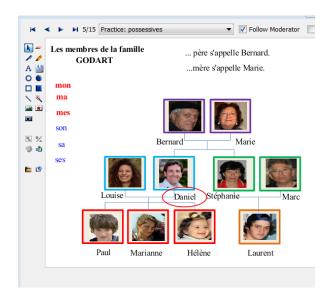
#### Used and extended

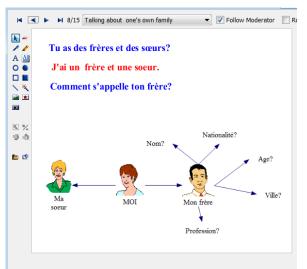
#### H → H 44/48 Restaurant dialogue Bien cuit, s'il vous plaît. A 🔠 Deux glaces à la vanille. 0 0 Une bouteille de vin rouge et une carafe d'eau. Nous prenons un steak frites et un saumon grillé. Un pâté de campagne et pour madame, une salade, s'il vous plaît. 80 % 90 Et après? Qu'est-ce que vous prenez comme dessert? Monsieur/madame... qu'est-ce que je vous sers en entrée ? Ouelle cuisson pour le steak? Très bien, et comme boisson?

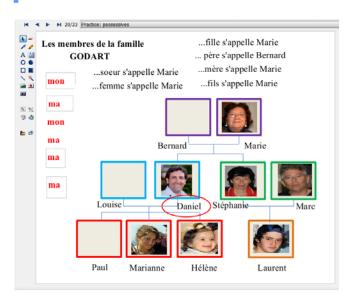
#### not used

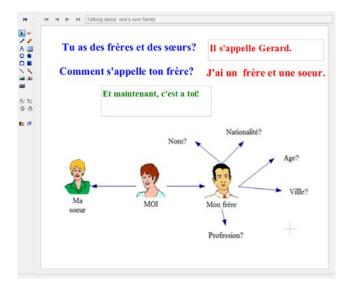




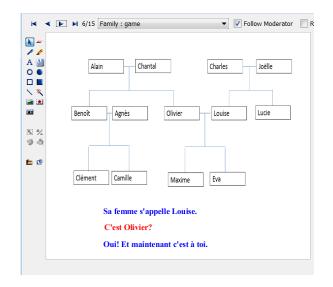


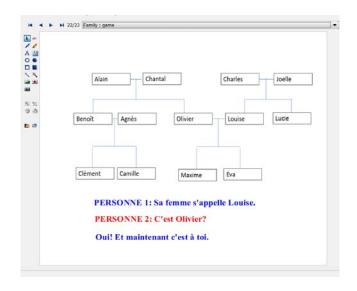




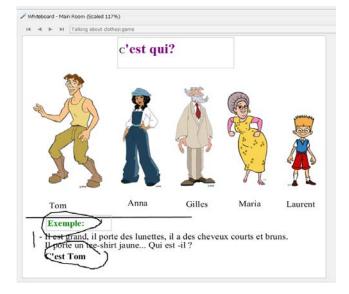








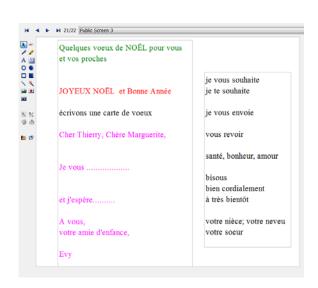


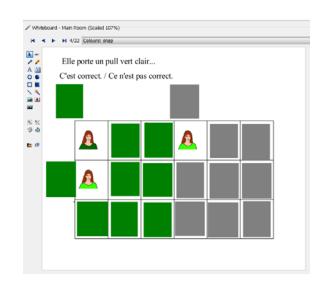




#### New slide

#### Used and extended



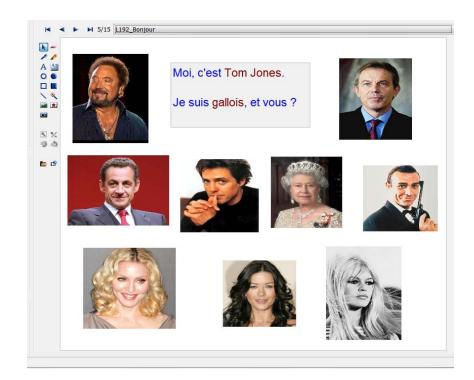




#### Not used



#### New slide



### Reasons for adaptation



- Interview 1: To create more interaction between students
- Interview 2: To give more support to students
- Interview 3: To emphasise on grammar structures/to practise language not taught in course
- Interview 4: To elicit vocabulary from students rather than giving it to them

These changes reflect each tutors' beliefs that they had described when asked to talk about their teaching approach.

They agree with the principles but they want to do it in their own way during the tutorials.

### Summary of findings

- Tutors use the L192 resources because they trust them
- The resources are fit for purpose
- The teaching guidelines are not always followed
- Tutors all seem to follow a communicative approach in their tutorials
- They adapt most resources using different techniques
- They adapt to suit learners' needs and teaching styles
- They may adapt the resources even if they think they fit with course objectives, methods and content
- Tutors have strong beliefs in their teaching approach

## Recommendations to course developers/creators of OERs



- Expect most practitioners to change resources
- Acknowledge all teaching styles
- Explain teaching suggestions clearly



### Further research

- To look into the reasons for changing in more depth: is it because they do not understand how the resource work or is it because they have their own interpretation of what communicative approach means online?
- To fill a gap in the literature about online materials adaptation
- To look into implications for OERs sharing and collaboration

### Any questions?



Thank you for your attention.

Do not hesitate to contact us.

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