Developing 'Global People':
Insights from International Partnerships

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Overview

- Introduction: the eChina-UK Programme
- Global People (GP): Intercultural Issues
- GP Intercultural Competency Framework
- Reflections on the Seminar Questions

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The eChina-UK Programme

eChina-UK Programme

- Set of Sino-British collaborative projects on eLearning in education

- Funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (£4 million) & supported by Chinese Ministry of Education

- Involved British and Chinese universities working in partnership

- The Programme has had 3 phases

eChina-UK Programme

Phases 1 & 2: British & Chinese universities worked collaboratively on range of eLearning in education projects

- Phase 1: 2003-2005.

- Phase 2: 2005-2007.

Phase 3: Global People Project
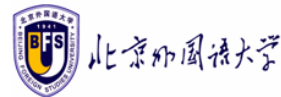
- Phase 3: 2007-2009.

eChina-UK Programme

Phase 1 (2003-2005) Collaborative Partnerships

- **English for academic exchange (CUTE1)**

- **eELT Methodology**

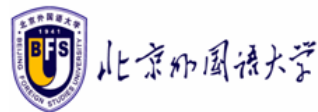- **Generic Pedagogy (incl. Educational Psychology, ICT & eLearning)**

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Phase 2 (2005-2007) Collaborative Partnerships

- **English for academic exchange** (CUTE 2)

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE   清華大学 Tsinghua University   THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

- **eTutor Training**

The University of Nottingham   BFS 北京外国语大学

- **Intercultural ePedagogy**

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY   北京师范大学 BEIJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY   The University Of Sheffield.

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eChina-UK Programme

Two of HEFCE's Key Goals for the eChina-UK Programme:

- Strengthen collaboration between China and the UK

- Disseminate generic insights on a range of issues, including the benefits & challenges of working interculturally

GlobalPe**⚇**ple

eChina-UK Programme

Phase 3 (Global People): 2008–2009

Key Aims:

- Draw out learning from the eChina-UK Programme on working interculturally

- Identify generic frameworks and models (i.e. not country specific)

- Develop resources that are of practical value to those working in international projects (especially in HE)

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Global People Project

Phase 3 (Global People): 2008–2009

Procedure:

- Review the literature on intercultural competence and on working across cultures

- Analyse data from the eChina-UK Programme & Projects from an intercultural perspective

- Collect new interview data from eChina-UK project members

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Ideas: Information Gathering

E-Learning Design

- Who plans/designs e-learning courses in UK universities?

- Who plans/designs e-learning courses in Chinese universities?

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Ideas: Goal Orientation

Tensions needing to be Balanced

Development of course materials as an end in itself ⟷ Development of course materials as a means of conducting applied research and of gaining generic insights

Development of a full course/module ⟷ Development of innovative samples

Design which is suited Chinese learners' current study preferences ⟷ Design which helps implement China's educational reform by giving more emphasis to student-centred learning and self-study

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Knowledge/Ideas-related Intercultural Competencies

❖ Information gathering

❖ New thinking

❖ Goal orientation

❖ Synergistic solutions

Communication: Language

Chinese or English?

Chinese 21: *The working language was English. Due to the language problems, when we couldn't express ourselves clearly, it seemed that we were disadvantaged.*

Communication: Language

English or Chinese?

Chinese 16: *"I think we should show consideration for each other in terms of language. China is now developing very fast; they should know some Chinese to communicate with us. … We have learned a lot of English; it's their turn to learn some basic Chinese, as it's two-way communication. I find it weird that they don't know even a word of Chinese."*

他们应该懂中文

Communication: Language Use

Meaning needs to be negotiated

British 09: *When I first joined, I spent weeks if not months on a simple practical confusion as to what is a unit, a module, what was the other one?*

British 06: *Activity*

British 09: *There was no standard definition, so I was like blocked at the first hurdle, and so I wasn't quite sure how much material I'd got to write … I thought I don't understand this, I can't do this.*

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Communication: Language

Attention to Communication Style

Chinese 06: *The UK colleagues are more likely to raise issues directly. Their logic is that issues should be raised first, then they'll try their best to find solutions. … Sometimes the UK project manager sent some suggestions to us. When we got the suggestion, we usually got nervous and wondered 'must we do it immediately?' or 'are they commanding us to do this?' But working together with them for a while I gradually realised that I could voice my opinions too and take time to think. It wasn't a problem.*

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Language-related Intercultural Competencies

❖ Language learning

❖ Language adjustment

❖ Active listening

❖ Attuning

❖ Stylistic flexibility

❖ Communication management

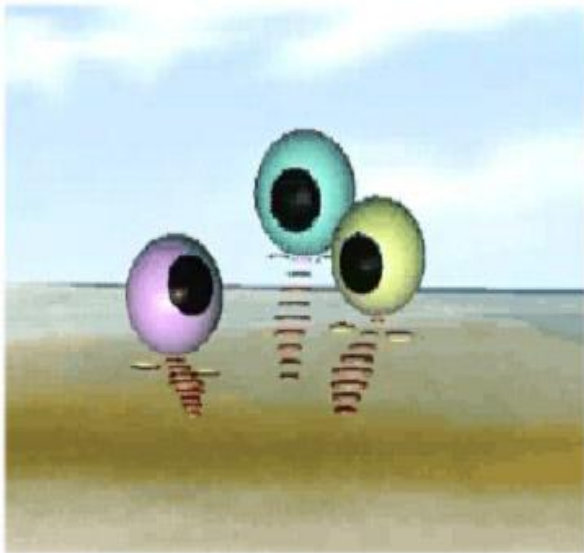❖ Building of shared knowledge (helps develop mutual trust)

Communication: Management
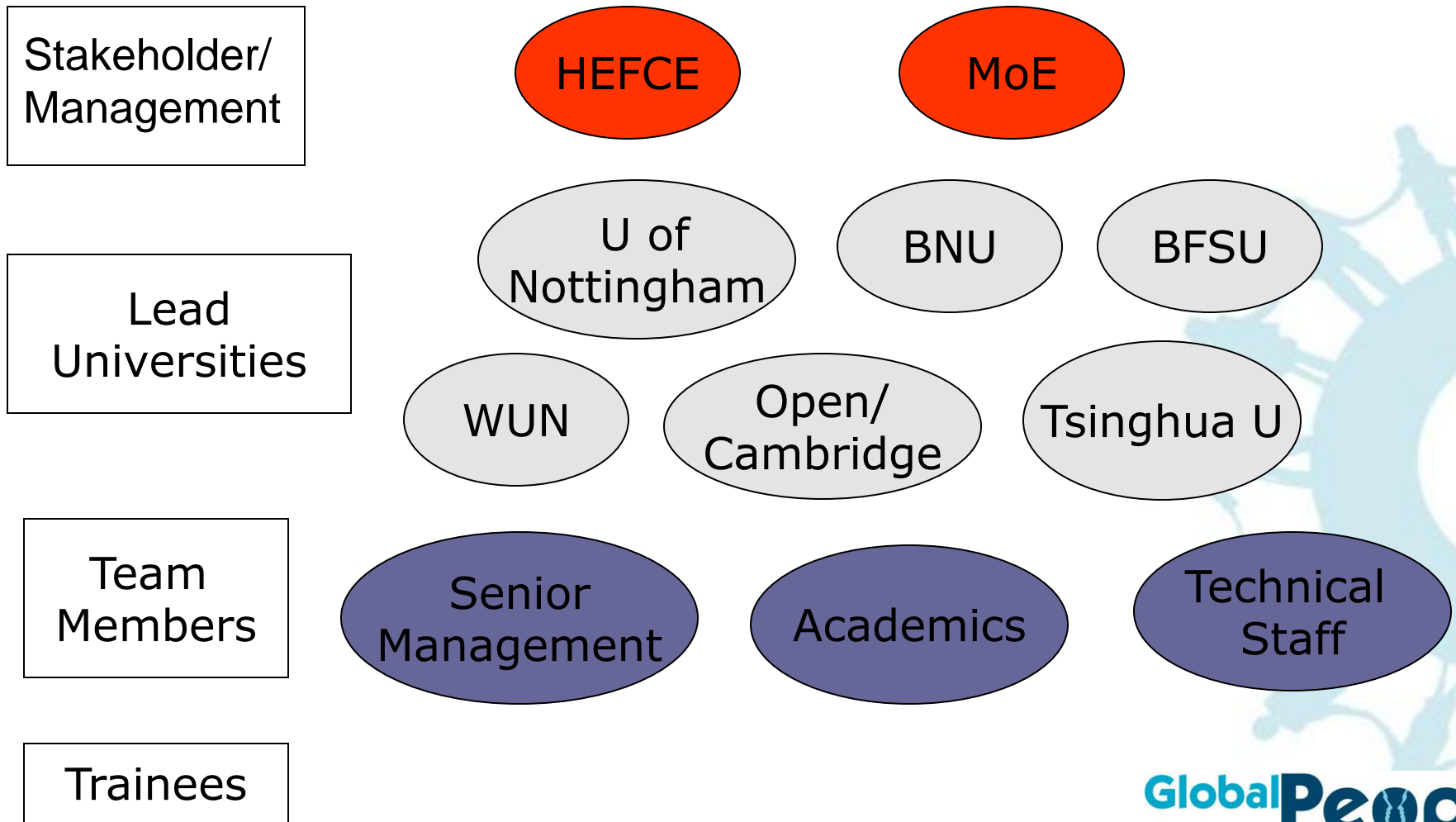
Management of Channels of Communication

Chinese Researcher: *In your opinion, was the communication effective?*

Chinese 20: *No, it wasn't. Though both Chinese and British sides had their own project managers, they couldn't do all the communications on their own. We should have embedded different communication mechanisms in the project at different levels.*

Communication: Management

Management of Communication Networks

Stakeholder/ Management

HEFCE

MoE

Lead Universities

U of Nottingham

BNU

BFSU

WUN

Open/ Cambridge

Tsinghua U

Team Members

Senior Management

Academics

Technical Staff

Trainees

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Communication: Management

Chinese 23: *"Great differences exist between the working mechanisms in China and in the West. …*

Our working procedures, overall circumstances, thinking style and decision-making processes etc. are not all the same."

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Communication: Management

Attention to Communication Protocols

Chinese 02: *Sending mass emails is a good way. But when we send such emails, it will infringe Chinese principles. If I send such an email to a person in a higher position, s/he will feel offended. Nowadays we send various materials by email, but Chinese are special, superiors will feel particularly insulted. …*
Sending emails to superiors is not a good way, because it shows no regard for status differences between people. Some superiors dislike equality, so the best way to communicate with them is to submit a report, either in written or oral form.

Communication: Management

1. Finding the right person to talk to
2. Establishing the most effective modes of communication
3. Establishing suitable networks for communication distribution
4. Agreeing on choice of language
5. Establishing communication protocols

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Communication: Establishing Shared Knowledge

- Not all information can be encoded in language;
- In IC interaction, people typically have less background knowledge in common;
- Deliberately planning for the establishment of shared knowledge is vital.

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Relationships

Attention to Relationships

British 06: *Whilst it is recognised that building social relationships serves to strengthen developing working relationships, it should likewise be acknowledged that this relies heavily on the willingness of team members to give of their free time, outside the boundaries of any given project. The value of this 'voluntary' input outside formal working time should not be underestimated, nor remain unacknowledged. There is a social dimension to effective team building that should ideally be built into the project.*

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Relationship-related Intercultural Competencies

❖ Welcoming of strangers

❖ Rapport building

❖ Sensitivity to social/professional context

❖ Interpersonal attentiveness

Personal Qualities

Need for Self-Awareness

Brit 17: *Can we step back a bit because we're getting a bit detailed?*

Brit 18: *Am I losing you?*

Ch 20: *Well to me it's a bit too detailed, can you give me an overall picture?*

# Personal Qualities/Dispositions as Intercultural Competencies

- ❖ Spirit of adventure
- ❖ Self-awareness
- ❖ Acceptance
- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ Inner purpose
- ❖ Coping
- ❖ Resilience

Global People Intercultural Competency Framework

The Competency Framework

- Identifies four competency clusters
  - Knowledge and Ideas
  - Communication
  - Relationships
  - Personal Qualities and Dispositions
- Explains each competency and discusses why it is important for intercultural effectiveness
- Illustrates each competency with a case study example from the eChina-UK Programme (some of them supported by audio clips)
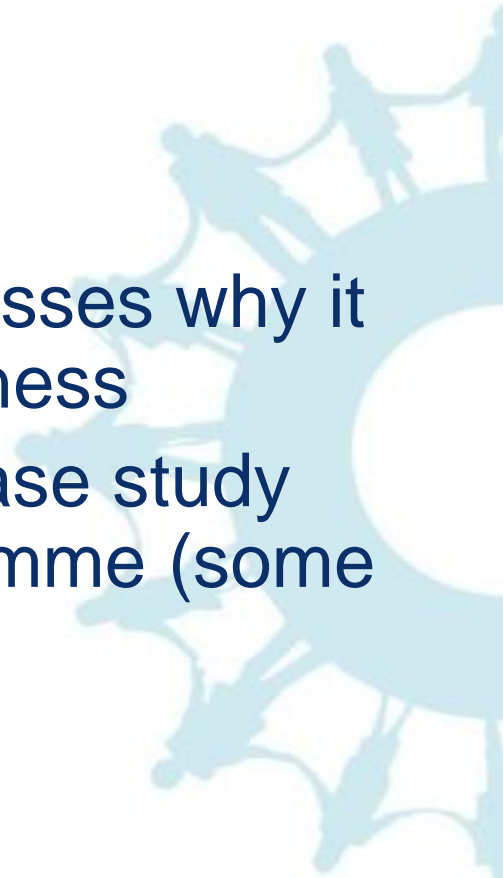
Case Study Example: Language Adjustment at the start of a meeting

Adjusting one's use of language to the proficiency level of the recipient(s) is vital for effective communication; however, it is sometimes easier said than done. Consider the following interaction that took place at one of our meetings:

◀ ▶

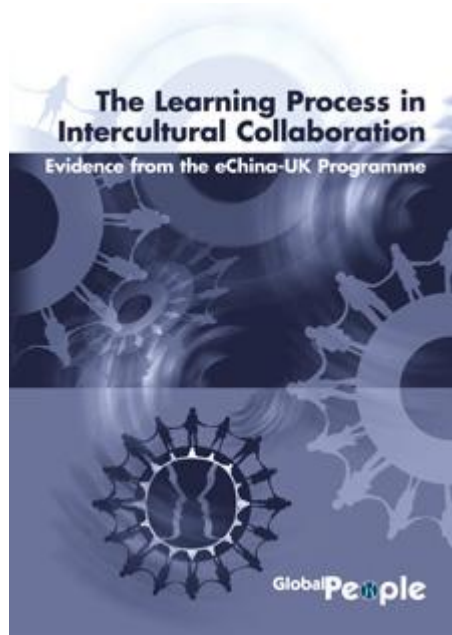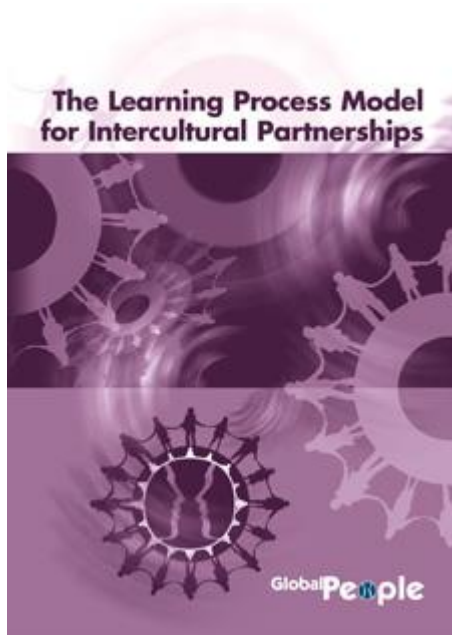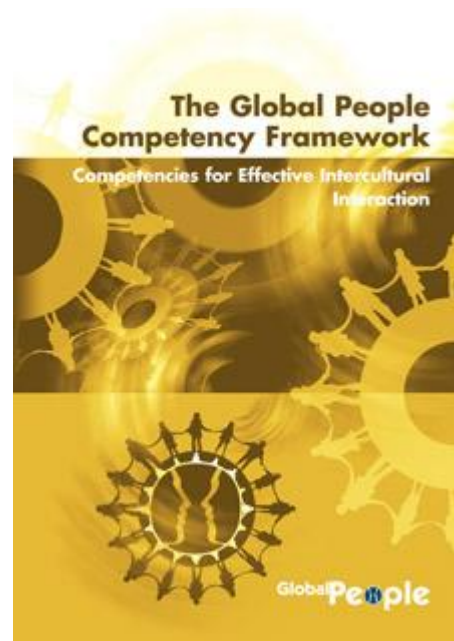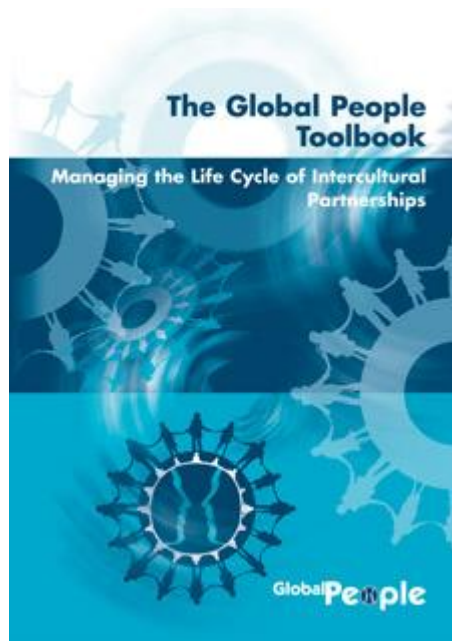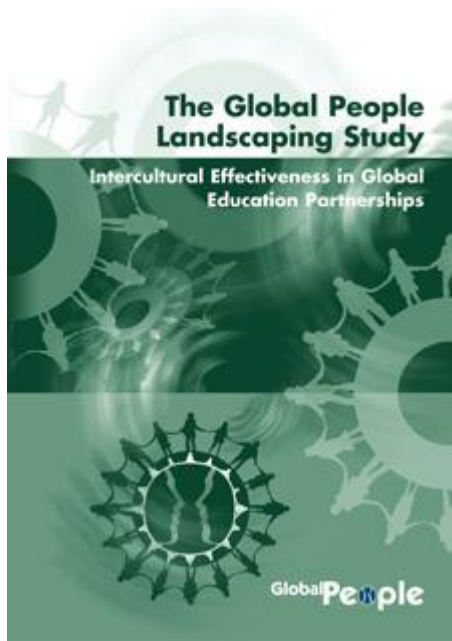| Chair:	*[…] I'm going to ask everybody to speak very clearly and uh without heavy accents if possible*
Everyone:	*Laughter [as the Chair speaks with a Scottish accent]*
Chair:	*and we may take some pauses just to make sure everybody uhm uh is keeping up with the conversation cause we can sometimes each of us speak very quickly when we get excited. Uh this afternoon is a chance for us really to explore the research issues ## tell each other what we're doing ## tell each other what we hope to achieve what we're aspiring to ### and it would be wonderful if we could perhaps focus on the use of technology in learning ## if that was of interest to you ##### so what I I'd like to do is I think it would be very helpful for one of our colleagues to volunteer to <as we say in Scotland: start the ball rolling cause we really love football>. Uh I think I think it would be fair to ask one of our colleagues to start the ball rolling and (name of British colleague) if you would like to kick off for us.*

This excerpt demonstrates a number of adjustment practices. The Chair clearly shows a high level of awareness of this competency, by asking participants to speak clearly, to avoid accents, to avoid fast speech and to pause regularly in order to ensure that all participants have the chance to follow the conversation. The Chair then goes on to put her insights into practice, speaking slowly and clearly, by pausing regularly (signalled by #) and trying to avoid the use of a heavy Scottish accent. However, only seconds later she speeds up (signalled by < >), falls into a heavy Scottish accent, uses an idiomatic expression ('to start the ball rolling') which leaves all but one of the Chinese participants with blank faces, and then goes on to repeat the idiom and to use complex vocabulary ('kick off'), which is unlikely to be understood and could easily have been replaced by a more simple word, such as 'start' or 'begin'.

Global People Resources

http://www.globalpeople.org.uk/

- Life cycle model of intercultural partnerships: *Global People Toolbook*

- Learning process model

- Competency framework

- Range of publications (downloadable, free of charge)

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The Global People
Landscaping Study

Intercultural Effectiveness in Global
Education Partnerships

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The Global People
Toolbook

Managing the Life Cycle of Intercultural
Partnerships

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The Global People
Competency Framework

Competencies for Effective Intercultural
Interaction

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The Learning Process Model
for Intercultural Partnerships

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The Learning Process in
Intercultural Collaboration

Evidence from the eChina-UK Programme

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Sino-British Interaction in
Professional Contexts

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Addressing this Seminar's Questions

Discourse Approach to ICC

- The relevance of a discourse approach

- The impact of absence of discourse
- The need to go beyond discourse

ICC and interdisciplinarity

The importance of:

- 'Knowledge and ideas' - subject-specific information

- Management

- Psychology (adjustment and stress)

Thank you

The Global People Team
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