

# The Climate Connection

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# Episode 10: Future perfect

#TheClimateConnection

[www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection](http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection)



## Episode overview

In our final episode, we draw together some of the main themes of this series and explore how language learning and the climate crisis should not be looked at in isolation, but rather how they are related to wider social justice issues. Renowned language expert Suzanne Romaine discusses some of her recent research into language and sustainable development, and the links between the climate crisis and language death.

In our second interview, we hear from Mike Solly about how the British Council's practices and values are developing with regards to the climate crisis, and from Mariana Roccia who focuses on topics as diverse as ecotourism, ecowriting and ecolinguistics. Our final *From the Field* is a 'vox pop special', where we find out more from our listeners all around the world about language teacher initiatives to fight the climate crisis. Our last *Green Glossary* looks at two more words which we haven't had the opportunity to look at elsewhere in the series, namely 'greenwash' and 'morbique'.



Suzanne Romaine



Mike Solly



Mariana Roccia

## In this episode

The poor remain poor not because they don't speak English, but due to deeply entrenched inequalities in the societies where they live.

The fate of most of the planet's biological linguistic and cultural diversity lies in the hands of a very small number of the world's poorest people who are most vulnerable to pressures of globalisation.

TEFL has had quite a history of being criticised for linguistic imperialism, and so being sensitive to the local culture and particularly how the other culture is representing ELT materials, such as coursebooks is really important.

This is another example of a perfect storm where inequalities, tied to ethnicity, gender, language socio-economic status, accumulate through life and compound over time.



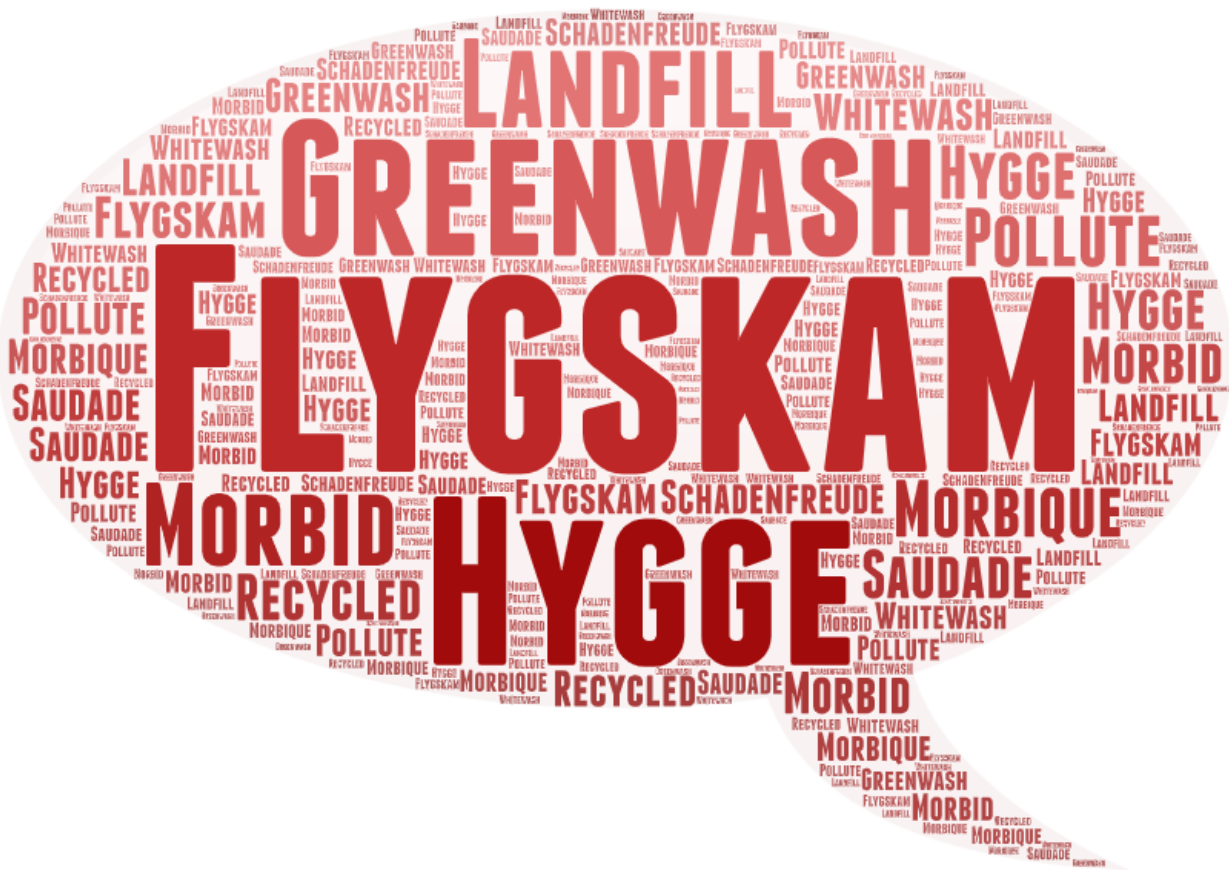
## From the field

One of the highlights of this series of *The Climate Connection* has been the vox pops which teachers and students from around the world have kindly sent us. We've heard from India, Guinea Bissau, Dubai, Portugal, Sudan and many other places in between. These vox pops have really brought home the fact that the climate crisis truly is a global crisis – with global solutions. And so, in our final From the Field, we've decided to showcase some of the vox pops we haven't yet had a chance to include.

## Green glossary

In this episode's Green Glossary, we hear about two climate-related words which have been overlooked in the series so far – 'morbique' and 'greenwash'.

The word cloud below shows the climate and English language related words used in this episode. Find out more about some of these words at the Oxford English Dictionary website: [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com). The OED have kindly made these words open access, so you can look them up even if you are not subscribed.



Flygskam

[Greenwash \[N\]](#)

[Greenwash \[V\]](#)

[Hygge](#)

[Landfill](#)

[Morbid](#)

[Morbique](#)

[Pollute](#)

[Recycled](#)

[Saudade](#)

[Schadenfreude](#)

[Whitewash \[N\]](#)

[Whitewash \[V\]](#)



# Teaching ideas

Why not use extracts from the podcast in your classroom? Here are some ideas of how you can use the interviews Episode 10.

## Interview: Mike Solly and Mariana Roccia

### Before listening: Introductory discussion

1. In the interview, Mike says the following: 'The Covid-19 crisis has also philosophically affected us as a generation'. In groups, ask students to discuss this statement and whether they agree with it.
2. Take feedback in class. Ensure that you represent the range of views which there might be.

### During listening: Focussed listening

1. Give students the text below spoken by Mariana (at 13:22 to 14:39). Ask students to complete the missing words.

Well you know, TEFL has had quite a history of being criticised for linguistic \_\_\_\_\_ (a), and so being sensitive to the local \_\_\_\_\_ (b) and particularly how the other culture is representing ELT materials, such as coursebooks is really important, especially if those materials have been developed without consulting, you know, \_\_\_\_\_ (c) experts or trying to incorporate the concerns that are around these \_\_\_\_\_ (d). This has powerful effects because it can undermine the local \_\_\_\_\_ (e) knowledge in exchange for what I think are perhaps more appealing aspirational values, which are quite often \_\_\_\_\_ (f), and continue to spread consumerist ideas which are not helpful in the long run. So going back to what we were talking about earlier, with a role that \_\_\_\_\_ (g), large organisations play like, like the British Council, and how materials are created, incorporating these contents, and the \_\_\_\_\_ (h) looking carefully at the values that are transmitted is crucial.

2. Students check their answers, which are as follows: (a) imperialism (b) culture (c) local (d) communities (e) ecological (f) unsustainable (g) institutions (h) values

### After listening: Extended work

1. The following website is mentioned by Mariana. Ask your students to look at the website, and perhaps do some of the activities there: <http://storiesweliveby.org.uk/>. This could also be done as a class project.





## Interview: Suzanne Romaine

### Before listening: Introductory discussion

1. Suzanne makes the following statements in her interview. In groups (or as a whole class), students should discuss (a) what these statements mean and (b) whether they agree with them. Ideally, the students should make brief notes about their discussions.
  - 'Another interesting thing is that speakers of languages and species face common threats'
  - 'When the rainforests are cleared, not only are species at risk but so are speakers of languages'
  - 'There are obviously connections between environmental justice and linguistic justice'
  - 'If a small language disappears, it's gone forever'
  - 'True development can't exist without linguistic development'
  - English falls really short of being the promised gateway to the global knowledge economy and economic development'

### During listening: Check

1. Students listen to the interview and check their predictions. Afterwards, discuss any 'gaps' between what they predicted and what was said.

### After listening: Research

1. Ask your students to look at the following website, which contains a list of freely available academic publications by Suzanne Romaine. Students can read them by themselves, in groups, or with you in a whole-class situation:  
<https://tinyurl.com/suzanneromaine>

## Glossary

The following words and phrases appear in Episode 10. You may wish to look them up if you are unfamiliar with any of them.

- |               |                |             |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| ▪ Adaptation  | ▪ Endemic      | ▪ Portray   |
| ▪ Armoury     | ▪ Figurative   | ▪ Semblance |
| ▪ Coalesce    | ▪ Minimal      | ▪ Tolerance |
| ▪ Consensus   | ▪ Misrepresent | ▪ Transmit  |
| ▪ Consumerist | ▪ Navigate     |             |
| ▪ Dividend    | ▪ Permanent    |             |



## Bonus material

Visit the podcast website, [www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection](http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection) for bonus material.

You can find a link to the podcast and the transcript of this episode at <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/podcast>

## Social media

Please share your views about this episode, and the series as a whole, on social media using the hashtag **#TheClimateConnection**. Let us know your thoughts, reflections, comments and whether you have been able to use any of the ideas in your teaching.

## Podcast feedback survey

Please tell us what you thought about this episode of the podcast and our podcast show notes by completing this short online survey.

Survey link: <http://bit.ly/PodcastFeedbackSurvey>



## Links



British Council TeachingEnglish  
[www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)

OxfordLanguages

Oxford Languages, the home of language data  
[languages.oup.com](http://languages.oup.com)



# Detailed notes

Use these notes to find out more about the contents of Episode 10.

Phrase	Explanation and Further Information
<b>Interview: Mike Solly and Mariana Roccia</b>	
Mariana Roccia	Visit <a href="https://www.mrlanguageservices.com/">https://www.mrlanguageservices.com/</a> for more information about Mariana's work and background.
Ecolinguistics	Ecolinguistics explores the role of language in the life-sustaining interactions of humans, other species and the physical environment.
David Attenborough	A British TV presenter who has made many programmes about the natural world, the environment and the climate crisis.
A project in Bangladesh	You can read more about this project in Bangladesh, entitled 'English in Action', at <a href="https://www.eiabd.com/">https://www.eiabd.com/</a> . Mike also wrote an academic paper called 'Attitudes to English as a language for international development in rural Bangladesh' on this project, which can be accessed for free at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/EIABangladesh">https://tinyurl.com/EIABangladesh</a> .
Bangladesh's environmental problems	Bangladesh faces particular challenges with regards to flooding, especially during the monsoon season. In recent years, these problems have been made worse because of deforestation in the Himalayas, meaning a larger volume of water reaches Bangladesh.
The Stories we Live By	You can access this course for free at <a href="http://storiesweliveby.org.uk/">http://storiesweliveby.org.uk/</a> . The aim of the course is as follows: 'The social and ecological issues that humanity currently faces are so severe that they call into question the fundamental stories that societies are based on. Ecolinguistics provides tools for revealing the stories we live by, questioning them from an ecological perspective, and contributing to the search for new stories to live by. The course examines a wide range of texts from advertisements, lifestyle magazines and economics textbooks to surfing guides, Native American sayings and Japanese animation. In each case, the question is whether the stories that underlie texts encourage us to care about people and the ecosystems that life depends on.'
Discourse analysis	Discourse analysis is the analysis of both written and spoken language in relation to its social context and refers to the way that different types of language construct meaning.
The International Ecolinguistics Association	The International Ecolinguistics Association is a network of 800 researchers from around the world who share ideas, opinions and articles about ecolinguistics. Visit <a href="http://ecolinguistics-association.org/">http://ecolinguistics-association.org/</a> .



Arran Stibbe	Find out more about Arran at <a href="https://www.glos.ac.uk/staff/profile/arran-stibbe/">https://www.glos.ac.uk/staff/profile/arran-stibbe/</a> . You can also access some of his publications at this link.
Gender fair	A teaching approach which ensures that females and males are treated equally and there is no discrimination or favouritism.
Cultural relations	The British Council says this about cultural relations: ‘Cultural relations among nations – involving state and non-state actors – were envisioned as being mutual, reciprocal, and as leading to trust-building. Cultural relations would be engendered through exchanges in arts and science, education and language, and also came to include understandings involving societal issues such as human rights and empowerment.’
TEFL	An acronym meaning ‘Teaching English as a Foreign Language’.
Linguistic imperialism	This term can be defined as the transfer of a dominant language to other people. Aspects of the dominant culture are usually transferred along with the language. Of particular importance and relevance is Robert Phillipson’s 1992 book, <i>Linguistic Imperialism</i> .
Local ecological knowledge	The knowledge and information which people have about the flora and fauna where they live.

### From the Field

A Life on Our Planet	Discover more at <a href="https://attenboroughfilm.com/">https://attenboroughfilm.com/</a> .
DSLR	A type of camera.
Biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste	Biodegradable waste can be broken down by bacteria in a natural way, e.g. fruit, vegetable, paper. Non-biodegradable waste, such as plastic and glass, does not break down.

### The Green Glossary

The Bureau of Linguistical Reality	Visit <a href="https://bureauoflinguisticalreality.com/">https://bureauoflinguisticalreality.com/</a> for more information about this interesting project.
Greenwashing	See the following sites for further information: <a href="#">Wikipedia</a> ; <a href="#">Client Earth</a> ; <a href="#">Bloomberg</a> .
Only a small proportion of plastic bottles end up being recycled	See, for example, <a href="#">this article</a> in the Guardian newspaper.
Schadenfreude	A German word referring to the emotion when you take pleasure in somebody else’s misfortune.





Hygge	A Danish word used when acknowledging a feeling or moment, whether alone or with friends, at home or out, ordinary or extraordinary, as cosy, charming or special.
Saudade	A Portuguese / Galician word meaning a deep emotional state of nostalgic or profound melancholic longing for something or someone that one cares for and/or loves.
Flygskam	Please listen to Episode 7 of The Climate Connection for more on this.

### Interview: Suzanne Romaine

The Merton Professor of English Language at Oxford University	Find out more about the position at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merton_Professors">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merton_Professors</a> . JRR Tolkien (the author of <i>The Hobbit</i> and <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> ) was a previous holder of the position.
Language change	The process by which a community of speakers abandons one language and changes to another. Many linguists differentiate between forced and unforced language change (sometimes called language shift).
UNESCO World Heritage Sites	Go to <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/</a> to find out more and see the whole list.
The ecology of language	Haugen himself defined this phrase as 'the study of interactions between any given language and its environment'.
Low footprint	The 'footprint' referred to here is the <i>carbon</i> or <i>environmental</i> footprint.
Indigenous peoples	Indigenous peoples (also described as 'first people', 'aboriginal people', 'native people', or 'autochthonous people') are culturally distinct ethnic groups who are native to a place which has been colonised and settled by another ethnic group.
No one knows exactly how many languages there are	<p>Alistair Pennycook argues that we need to be 'constantly skeptical' and to 'ask hard questions about what we mean by 'language' and what different concepts, ideologies, or discourses we mobilize by particular constructions of the term'.</p> <p>Indeed, when 'language' is juxtaposed with terms such as 'macrolanguage' or 'dialect', the boundaries of the term can become extremely fuzzy.</p> <p>Suzanne Romaine (1994) makes the point that creating a boundary for a language is a 'European cultural artefact' which emerged out of policies such the development of mass literacy and standardisation, and which does not represent genuine 'communicative practices'.</p>



Subsistence economies	A subsistence economy is an economy directed to basic subsistence (the provision of food, clothing, shelter) rather than to the 'free market'.
The 'killer language' metaphor	Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1995) argue that 'language death' (linguicide) can be either active – where the nation state directly attempt to kill a language – or passive – where 'unsupported coexistence' effectively euthanises a language.
90per cent of languages are excluded from school	In her writing, Suzanne Romaine argues that where local languages are not part of the educational language policy, the education system reproduces rather than reduces inequality of access. Wiseby (2016) estimates that 2.3 billion people lack access to education in their first language.
A massive global shift in English as a medium of instruction	<p>Dearden (2014), in the British Council publication <a href="#"><i>English as a medium of instruction – a growing global phenomenon</i></a> describes English as a medium of instruction as 'the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English'.</p> <p>The adoption of English as the sole, or more often a component, of language-in-education policies has increased considerably over the past 30 or so years, both within government education systems and also in so-called low-cost private schools. One of the main reasons for this are the actual or perceived economic benefits of making this shift, whether at the individual/family, or national level. Dearden further argues that where English was part of the language-in-education policy, around 85 per cent of them had a shortage of qualified English-speaking teachers.</p>
The Education for All agenda	<p>The Education for All agenda has six main goals, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal 1: Expand early childhood care and education</li> <li>• Goal 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all</li> <li>• Goal 3: Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults</li> <li>• Goal 4: Increase adult literacy by 50 percent</li> <li>• Goal 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015</li> <li>• Goal 6: Improve the quality of education</li> </ul>
Climate refugees	People who have been forced to leave their home as a result of the effects of climate change on their environment.
Translators Without Borders	Translators without Borders (TWB) is a non-profit organisation offering language and translation support for humanitarian and development agencies, and other non-profit organisations on a global scale. Visit <a href="https://translatorswithoutborders.org/">https://translatorswithoutborders.org/</a>



Here's the rub	An idiom which means <i>here's the problem</i> .
The Rohingya people	UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the Rohingya as 'one of, if not the, most discriminated people in the world'. They are one of Myanmar's many ethnic minorities. They have their own language and culture and say they are descendants of Arab traders and other groups who have been in the region for generations. However, the government of Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country, denies the Rohingya citizenship and even excluded them from the 2014 census, refusing to recognise them as a people, seeing them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.
Unaccredited education services	Education providers which may lack necessary quality or value.
Varieties of English	It is common to equate the umbrella term 'English' with 'standard English', that is, the form of English which is widely accepted as the 'correct' and 'proper' form. In addition to what could be defined as a prestige forms of English, such as British English and (North) American English, there are a raft of other Englishes such as Indian English, Nigerian English, Gulf English, and varieties which can be described as 'Southern Hemisphere Englishes', which includes Australian and New Zealand English. Beyond this there are also English-based creole languages (e.g., Singlish or Tok Pisin), macaronic Englishes (e.g. Spanglish or Taglish) and constructed languages based on English (e.g. Globish or simplified English).
Lee Kuan Yew	Prime Minister of Singapore from 1959 to 1990 and recognised as the nation's founding father. Find out more at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Kuan_Yew">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Kuan_Yew</a> .

