



## The Climate Connection

---

# Episode 1: Taking the temperature

#TheClimateConnection

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



## Episode overview

The opening episode of The Climate Connection considers what the ELT Community is already doing – and what it should be doing – about the climate crisis. The first interview is with Harry Kuchah Kuchah, President of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, who provides some general guidance on this issue whilst also talking specifically about his work in Cameroon and with young learners.

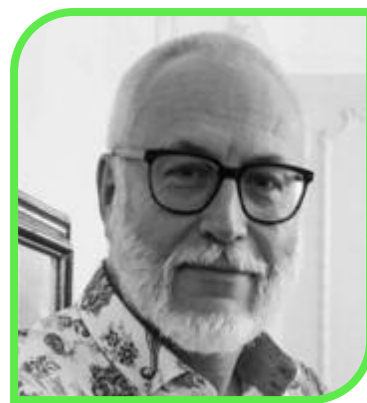
Picking up some of Harry's main themes, Deepa Mirchandani and Chris Graham talk about their forthcoming report, *Language Teaching for the Planet*, which brings together the reflections and ideas of hundreds of professionals working in the ELT sector. In between, in *From the Field*, we visit the coastal city of Gabes in Tunisia, where we discover how one school is not only directly involving itself in environmental clean-up campaigns of the heavily-polluted beaches, but is using the waste materials they find to learn English. And finally, in *The Green Glossary*, the term 'Climate Emergency' – the 2019 Oxford Word of the Year – will be explained by an editor from the Oxford English Dictionary.



Harry Kuchah Kuchah



Deepa Mirchandani



Chris Graham

## In this episode

Language is a symbolic tool which shapes the way we behave and the way we respond

Language education is the most powerful of the powerful weapons

We're keen to do this, but we don't know how to

I would like to know how I can help

The idea of authenticity is often not situated in the person

Young people are mostly getting information about climate change outside of school

The English language is a melting pot for what every other subject area does





# From the field

Feten Abdelmalek is our guide this week as she and her students clean up a beach in Gabes, a coastal city in Tunisia. We find out about the different and innovative ways in which they use the hundreds of bottle tops they collect for language learning purposes.



## Green Glossary

In this episode, Oxford University Press talk to us about the 'word of the year' in 2019: **climate emergency**. The word cloud below shows the other climate-related words discussed in the 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.



[Carbon footprint](#)

Solastalgia

[Food mile](#)

Clexit

[Rewilding](#)

Dirty weather

Climate chaos

[Global heating](#)

[Climate change](#)

[Flight shame](#)

[Eco-anxiety](#)

[Ecocide](#)

Anthropause

[Climate denial](#)

[Greenwashing](#)



# Teaching Ideas

Why not use extracts from the podcast in your classroom? Here are some ideas of how you can use the two interviews in episode 1.

## Interview 1: Harry Kuchah Kuchah

### Before listening: Prediction task

1. Present students with the following quotations from Harry's interview. In pairs or small groups, they should discuss what they think about them.
  - 'English language education is kind of the melting pot for what every other subject area does.'
  - 'The way we communicate, the way we engage with people can make or mar the planet because they can shift people's attitudes and beliefs and actions.'
  - 'Language is, is a symbolic tool and the way we use it shapes the way we behave, the way we respond.'
  - 'I think that there is a bond between every teacher and their students that is stronger than every other bond outside the classroom.'
2. Take class feedback. Tell them to check if Harry had the same ideas as them when they listen.

### While listening: Notetaking task

1. Ask students to make notes about Harry's interview. You could suggest that they use the following headings:
  - Why language is important with regards to the climate crisis
  - What IATEFL is doing
  - How language learning can be political
  - What's important when creating language materials and textbooks
  - Why learner autonomy is important
2. After listening, students compare their notes. They should add and change information as necessary.

### After listening: Create questions

1. Using their notes, students should create questions about Harry's interview. They should also write down the answers. You might give them an example question (e.g. How has IATEFL made its practices more sustainable?)
2. Students ask these questions to their classmates.



## Interview 2: Chris Graham and Deepa Mirchandani

### Before listening: Prediction task

1. The guests in this podcast discuss a survey which the British Council created. It asked English language teachers around the world how they are integrating climate change issues into their teaching practice.

In pairs / small groups, discuss what kind of responses you think teachers may have given to this survey. Then check your predictions when you listen to the interviewees.

### While listening: Listen for detail

1. Ask students to make specific notes about the following, which are mentioned in this interview by either Chris Graham (CG) or Deepa Mirchandani (DM). You can find out where these items are said by looking in the episode transcript.

- ELT Footprint (CG)
- Individual action (DM)
- Togo and Brazil (CG)
- Diana Torosyan at the American University of Armenia (CG)
- Racial justice (DM)
- Mindset (DM)
- Publishers (CG)
- Plastic bags in Togo (CG)
- Tipping point (DM)

### After listening: Reading and summary task

1. For homework, ask students to read some of the report ([www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection](http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection)). You could give each student one or two pages to read.
2. Students then report back in the next lesson about what they learnt.

## Glossary

The following words and phrases appear in Episode 1. You may wish to look them up if you are unfamiliar with any of them.

- Behavioural change
- Biodegradable
- Bushfire
- Carbon footprint
- Cascading
- Container
- Ecosystem
- Evidence
- Evolve
- Green shoots
- Innovation
- Isolated
- Laggard
- Let the genie out of the box
- Market differentiator
- Mismatch
- Networks
- Optimistic
- Pessimistic
- Stakeholders
- Step change
- Tangible
- Tipping point
- Trend
- Urgent
- Withdrawal





## Bonus material

Visit the podcast website, [www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection](http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection) for bonus material, including the full, unedited interview with Harry Kuchah Kuchah.

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)



International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

[www.iatefl.org](http://www.iatefl.org)

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 1.

Time	Phrase	Explanation and Further Information
<b>Interview 1: Harry Kuchah Kuchah</b>		
2:23	'Harry Kuchah Kuchah'	Find out more about Harry, his research interests and his publications <a href="#">here</a> .
2:38	'Cameroon'	Cameroon is a country in west-central Africa. Approximately 25 million people speak more than 250 languages.
2:41	'IATEFL'	Founded in 1967, <a href="#">IATEFL</a> (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) is a member organisation which links, develops and supports English language teaching professionals worldwide.
2:47	'ELAG (English Language Advisory Group)'	An advisory committee of education and language experts which scrutinises the British Council's work in ELT in the UK and worldwide. More information can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
3:56	'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.'	<a href="#">This blog</a> contextualises Nelson Mandela's quotes, and provides further useful information about them.
4:27	'Languaging'	According to Swain (2006), languaging is a 'means to mediate cognition' (p. 96) and 'a process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language' (p. 98).
4:42	'Sub-Saharan Africa'	The term commonly used to collectively describe the countries of Africa which lies (approximately) south of the Sahara. <a href="#">The United Nations Development Programme</a> classifies 46 of Africa's 54 nation states being in sub-Saharan Africa.
5:42	'Voices'	<i>Voices</i> is a members-only publication created by IATEFL.
6:06	'Carbon footprint'	See <a href="http://www.carbonfootprint.com">www.carbonfootprint.com</a> for more information.
7:20	'Critical listeners'	Students who not only listen to a text but analyse and evaluate it to assess whether the information is valid, and the extent to which they agree with it.
9:25	'Discrete pieces of knowledge'	When grammar and vocabulary items are taught separately and isolation, with no clear links between the ideas.
9:30	'Paradigm (shift)'	A major change in the concepts and practices of how something works or is achieved. Further information can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
11:04	'School protocols'	The rules and norms which are found in many schools.



11:30	'French medium part of the country'	As a result of its colonial history, Cameroon has Anglophone (predominantly English-speaking) and Francophone (predominantly French-speaking) parts.
12:25	'Michael West'	<a href="#">This excellent resource</a> at the University of Warwick provides background information about the life and writing of the educator Michael West.
12:50	'Pedagogy of partnership'	<a href="#">This interview</a> on a TESOL blog, focusing on teaching ELT in challenging contexts, provides more information about pedagogies of partnership.
14:16	'Learner autonomy'	According to <a href="#">this excellent Oxford University Press blog</a> , 'Learner autonomy is when students take control and responsibility for their own learning, both in terms of what they learn and how they learn it'
15:29	'Global Issues Special Interest Group'	You can find out more about GISIG at <a href="https://gisig.iatefl.org/">https://gisig.iatefl.org/</a> .

### Vox pop

15:45	'Benin'	Benin is a country in West Africa with a population of around 12 million. Its official language is French, but many indigenous languages are also spoken.
16:33	'Deforestation'	Click <a href="#">here</a> for a newspaper report about deforestation in Benin.

### From the Field

16:52	'Tunisia'	Find out more about Tunisia with <a href="#">this BBC profile</a> .
17:05	'Faces many environmental challenges'	<a href="#">A report by the British newspaper The Guardian</a> about some of the environmental challenges found in Tunisia.
17:14	'Gabes'	More information about Gabes <a href="#">can be found here</a> .
17:38	'Recycling plastic bottle caps'	<a href="#">Some ideas</a> for using plastic bottle tops for learning.
19:24	'Climate change ... in our lesson plans'	Get ideas for how to integrate teaching about the climate emergency in your lessons at <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection">www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection</a> . Specific resources for schools <a href="#">can be found here</a> .

### Interview 2: Chris Graham and Deepa Mirchandani

20:18	'A new report by the British Council'	This report will be available on the Climate Connection website from early June 2021.
20:30	'Deepa Mirchandani'	See <a href="http://www.deepandmeaningful.co">www.deepandmeaningful.co</a> for more information.
20:40	'Chris Graham'	See <a href="http://www.christophergrahamelt.com">www.christophergrahamelt.com</a> for more information.





21:31	'ELT Footprint'	Find out more and join the movement at <a href="https://eltfootprint.org/">https://eltfootprint.org/</a>
22:05	'COP 26'	The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The official UK government website for COP26 is <a href="https://ukcop26.org/">https://ukcop26.org/</a> .
24:20	'Diana Torosyan'	More information about Diana's project can be found at <a href="https://ace.aua.am/ourplanet/">https://ace.aua.am/ourplanet/</a> , and you can hear her talking about it from 31 minutes on <a href="#">this YouTube video</a> .
25:15	'Eco-anxiety'	The feeling of being overwhelmed, stressed or depressed by the existential challenge of climate change. See <a href="#">this BBC report</a> for more information. Episode 8 of this podcast series – 'Present Tense' – will focus specifically on this issue.
29:11	'Step change'	A significant change in policy or attitude, especially one that results in an improvement or increase.
29:24	'Moldova English Teachers Association'	<a href="#">Click here</a> for the META-Moldova Facebook page.
29:25	'Togo Teachers Association'	<a href="#">Click here</a> for the Togo English Teachers Organization Facebook page.
31:26	'Tipping point'	The point at which a series of small changes or incidents becomes significant enough to cause a larger, more important change.
32:23	'Market differentiator'	What distinguishes your business from others in your sector.
<b>The Green Glossary</b>		
34:45	'OED'	Visit <a href="https://oed.com/">https://oed.com/</a> for more information about the Oxford English Dictionary. <a href="#">This Wikipedia entry</a> also has some interesting and useful background.
36:36	'Neologisms'	The <a href="#">updates page</a> at the OED contains details of neologisms which have gone into the dictionary.
36:57	'Oxford Languages'	Visit <a href="https://languages.oup.com/">https://languages.oup.com/</a> for more information.
36:58	'Word of the year'	Visit the <a href="#">Oxford Languages website</a> for a short history of the Word of the Year. <a href="#">Click here</a> for a report by the Guardian newspaper about 'climate emergency' being chosen in 2019.
37:30	'Corpus'	<a href="#">This article</a> on the British Council website explains in more detail what a language corpus is. Note that the plural form is <i>corpora</i> .



37:46	'Compound'	A word which combines two or more different words. A compound can be written either as one word, or separate words.
38:27	'The Guardian'	See <a href="#">this article</a> by the Guardian, which explains their decision.
38:47	'Because COVID-19 and other issues were so dominant'	<a href="#">Click here</a> for a special update by the Oxford English Dictionary about the language of Covid-19. A report about the 2020 Word of the Year <a href="#">can be accessed here</a> .
39:02	'Anthropause'	<a href="#">Click here</a> for a report in the Smithsonian magazine about the anthropause.
41:05	'Solastalgia'	A <a href="#">short article</a> on the BBC website entitled 'Have you ever felt solastalgia?'
42:48	'Climate reality project'	Visit the website <a href="https://www.climaterealityproject.org/">https://www.climaterealityproject.org/</a> for more details on this organisation.

## Reference

**Swain, M.** (2006) Languaging, Agency and Collaboration in Advanced Second Language Proficiency. In: Byrnes, H., Ed., *Advanced Language Learning: The Contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky*, Continuum, London, 95-108.

