

## The Scottish English Podcast

### E08 Voices from Scotland | Claire - Edinburgh | The Scottish English Podcast

<i>Transcript</i>	<i>Vocabulary and grammar structures you should know. *= meaning used in the podcast if there is more than one meaning.</i>	<i>Collocations, idioms and other useful phrases.</i>
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**Claire | Kilted English:** Hi, and welcome to the Scottish English Podcast where you can improve your English while learning about Scottish culture history and accents. In today's episode, we've got the first in a new series where we've got Voices from Scotland. Where we talk with people from Scotland, um, or those who now call Scotland their home.

And today I'm delighted to be talking to another Claire, a wonderful name. Uh, and Claire is, um, the owner of the Edinburgh experience. So Claire comes from a long line of teachers and has, uh, first caught the bug of teaching herself when she moved to Spain 16 years ago. She's now since moved back to Scotland and is now the owner of the Edinburgh experience, which I mentioned before, a school specializing in cultural immersive experiences and preparation for the C2 Proficiency, Cambridge English exam.

She's also in her own words, an absolute history and literature geek with a passion for educating the world on Scottish culture. Scottish culture. So an absolutely perfect guest for me to have on the Scottish English Podcast. Hi there, Claire. How are you doing?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Hey Claire. Nice to see you and hear you.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Wonderful. Um, I

The bug (noun)

/bʌg/

- an enthusiastic interest in something such as a sport or a hobby

Immersive (noun)

/ɪ'mɜːsɪv/

- that seems to surround the player or viewer so they feel totally involved in the experience

Geek (noun)

/gi:k/

- a person who is very interested in and who knows a lot about a particular subject

- Catch the bug
- Be bitten by the bug

- Geek and nerd are synonyms, but geek is more often used in British English

wondered if you could, um, start off by telling us, um, which part of Scotland, um, are you from? Do you think that you're from, uh, where have you lived in different parts of Scotland? If you have moved around?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** So I am Edinburgh, born and bred. Um, Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. I grew up here right in the city centre as well of Edinburgh, until I was 18 years old. And then I moved to Glasgow, which for those of you who know anything about Scotland, there's a lot of rivalry between those two cities. So Edinburgh and Glasgow are the biggest cities in Scotland. They're on opposite coasts. Edinburgh is East Coast and Glasgow is West Coast, and I moved to Glasgow for university. I. And I was there for four years to do my, um, undergraduate degree. Uh, and I love Glasgow. I still love Glasgow. I actually always said if I moved back to Scotland, I would move back to Glasgow.

That didn't happen. I ended up going back to Edinburgh. Um, but I think one of the really nice things, because Edinburgh is a small, big city. One of the nice things about living in a very big city, which I did in Madrid, was that it made distances, for example, between Glasgow and, and, and Edinburgh, much more feasible to deal with.

You can get to Glasgow in about 50 minutes by

Rivalry (noun)

/'raɪvri/

- a state in which two people, companies, etc. are competing for the same thing

- Rivalry (with somebody/something) (for something)
- Rivalry (between A and B) (for something)

train from Edinburgh, which is the same quite often as I would have to travel to teach an English class when I first moved to Madrid

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** so I use both cities a lot more now, is really nice. And even though I am definitely an Edinburgh girl. I think Glasgow's always gonna be a big part of my heart 'cause I do love that

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah. A bit of a soft spot there. Yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** It's a great

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** culturally actually, especially in terms of theatre and music, art, a lot more happens in Glasgow and it's a

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** much more exciting city for that than Edinburgh. Edinburgh's very famous for that because in August we have the world's biggest arts, international arts festival.

Uh,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** however, outside of August, very little happens in Edinburgh and actually a lot of our cultural spaces, especially for live music, have closed or are closing.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Glasgow, I've always thought is a much more welcoming city in terms of, you know, being whoever you want to be. Definitely, I think more interesting for artists, for musicians, actors, and so on.

**Claire | Kilted English:** I think Edinburgh's got the reputation of being like the poster boy for Scotland almost, you know? Or the poster girl. Um, you know, it's very famous. It's got a castle in the middle, so it's beautiful. People love to come and see it, but yeah, if you're, if you're living there, the castle's just there. Um, and I think, uh, I think it doesn't always transfer to the people who live in those cities, uh, uh, sometimes.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Yeah, I mean Edinburgh is beautiful. I don't think anyone would argue that. And it's, it's immediately beautiful. Um, Glasgow, sometimes you have to work a little bit harder to see the beauty of it, but it definitely pays off 'cause it's got some absolutely stunning and incredible places as well.

Poster boy (noun)

- a person who is seen as representing a particular quality or activity

Also:

- Poster child
- Poster girl

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm. Wonderful. So you said you lived in Glasgow for about four years, did you say, for uni? Yeah. Okay, great. And then, um, I wanna talk about accents, 'cause that's a, a focus of this podcast. And I wondered how do you describe your accent? How would you describe it?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** How would I describe it? As in, where's it from? So

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah, exactly. Or how has it been influenced by anything? Um, you moving around, uh, things like that.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** it's definitely been influenced, I think, by teaching English. So,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** I will generally speak pro probably more clearly in some things I'm very proud of my Scottish accent. I think Um, accents are great things, uh, and they're a massive part of our identity. And being Scottish is a big part of my identity. When I lived in Glasgow, I, I'm someone that will tend to like pickup accents. When I lived in Glasgow, I tended to speak with more of a glaswegian accent, which is like this, for those of you that aren't familiar. So they're kind of like the Mexicans of the English language speaking world. And everything goes up at the end.

Glaswegian (adjective)

/glæz'wi:dʒən/

- from or connected with Glasgow in Scotland

<p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Mm-hmm.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> uh, I used to. Bizarrely. I used to wait waitress and when, wherever I waitressed, if I was speaking in English, I just had a glaswegian accent. I don't know why. When I came through here as well, I quite often get asked by people if I'm American, I.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Interesting.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> I get that a lot from, um, L2 speakers of English. I don't know. I think that's very interesting 'cause I don't think I sound remotely American,</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> No.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> lot of, a lot of people do ask me that question. Um. I think maybe that slightly more sing songy <u>lilty</u> might have it. I don't have what I would say a closed Scottish accent is, but for example, all my vowel sounds are very Scottish. I roll my Rs more, uh, than a lot of other people. I, I would personally <u>advocate</u> that clear Scottish accents are easier to understand than English ones very often because pronounce Riz, for example, like the word car which I think can be very hard when that long vowel is done. Like car. That can be very hard to understand.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Yeah.</p>	<p>Lilt (noun) /lɪlt/ - the pleasant way in which a person's voice rises and falls</p> <p>Advocate (verb) /'ædvəkeɪt/ - to support something publicly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advocate something</li> <li>- Advocate (somebody) doing something</li> <li>- Advocate that...</li> </ul>
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**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** I mean, I think, uh, people would probably, I think an important thing to understand about accents in the UK is that they're completely interconnected with your social class much more than in lots of other cultures that I've experienced. I think a lot of people would immediately clock me as middle class because of the way that I talk, The minute you open your mouth, someone's judging you socioeconomically in the UK because of, of how you're speaking. and, and like all accents, uh, you know, I modify and change it depending on who I'm talking to, which we all do that, right? So we all have that shape. So, uh, you know, I also am also a tour guide as well as a teacher. I may have been known to, you know, emphasize my Scottish accent slightly when I'm taking American tourists round cos they like that stuff and I certainly make it clearer when I'm speaking to people who, whose don't have English as a first language yeah. Yeah. And then if I'm with certain friends, it sounds different to, with other friends or with family and so on, you know, we all code our language. Right. And, I think that's true of accents too.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm. I think, yeah. It's so interesting to, to see those differences and then even see in yourself when, when you change, depending on who you're talking to. I think it's,

Clock someone as (verb)

/klok/

- to notice or recognize somebody

Pal (noun)

/pæl/

- a friend



<p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> for sure</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> it's so fascinating. I. I, uh, I think I, as a teacher, I pronounce my t's a lot more, uh, than I would if I'm speaking to friends from my hometown. Um, yeah, I did definitely drop them a lot when I'm, when I'm with, uh, friends from where I grew up, so, yeah. Interesting. Okay.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> I love that about the scottish accent,</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> And, um, you said, yeah, yeah,</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> the <u>glottal stop</u>. I love it. It's one of my favourite things this, my</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> yeah, I was just gonna say fascinating. You know, I don't say fascinating. Fascinating.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> I just love words like kettle, kettle of little butter instead of butter.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Butter.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> great.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Better butter. Um, so let's think about more about, um, words and phrases</p>	<p>Glottal stop(noun) / ,glɒtl 'stɒp/ - a speech sound made by closing and opening the <b>glottis</b>, which in English is sometimes used for /t/, for example in <i>atlas</i></p>	
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from your hometown or your area. What would you say are some, uh, key words that people might need to know from, from Edinburgh if they're not from

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** From Edinburgh. I'm probably really outta date with this now though, however, so barry was one when I was which meant like cool and good. Um, we used

**Claire | Kilted English:** I, I also, so I, I was just gonna say, I, I didn't grow up in Edinburgh. I grew up in Dundee, which, uh, has a whole different dialect and whole different accent than, um, than Edinburgh. And I didn't know the word barry until I moved to Edinburgh, and I was living in Edinburgh because I, I was like, well, heck, does that mean, so, yeah. Uh, yeah, it was a new one for me. Any others?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** So, yeah, but this, going back to, this is really going back to my youth, right? So barry is definitely one of them, a random, and I think this was a very Edinburgh thing. Like you would go to a party and you were talking about the party and then they were like, oh, and then some random was there, you know, some person we didn't but I feel like we use that a lot more on the East coast than we did on the west coast. Chuggy was one we used for a while for chewing gum.

<p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Yep.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> I dunno</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Yeah.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> had that word.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> We use chuggie as well,</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> Uh,</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> or <u>choonie</u>. We used to, we used to call it choonie in Dundee</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> choonie?. Alright. , we didn't do</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> do. Yeah.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> chuggy for us here. Definitely. Um, something that I think, I don't know if it's East coast or just Scotland in general, is going in for a friend. I. Which was always one of my favourites.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Mm-hmm.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> I was to say that I was and knock on your door. Also this doesn't really exist, anymore 'cause everyone has mobile phones. I'm showing my age, but, uh, know, I'll, I'll come in for you. I'll come in for you</p>		
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at five. So it's like I'll come and walk past your house and get you

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah. Come and get, yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** at five o'clock. Baltic.

**Claire | Kilted English:** think we, Baltic. Yeah, that's, uh, I think that's the whole Scotland thing, right? Like I don't think it's just, uh

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** I said that to an English friend and she had no idea what I was talking about

**Claire | Kilted English:** Oh, really? Okay. Interesting.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** that Baltic meant freezing, which I felt, isn't that quite explanatory? I always thought that was quite obvious.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Well, well, funny thing is, so now I live in Poland and I live about half an hour drive from the Baltic Sea, and actually the Baltic Sea is warmer, is warmer than the North Sea. So it's quite funny that we say Baltic when it's a warmer sea than the one that's right next to our, our own, our own land. So, yeah.

Interesting, right?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** That

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** One of my favourite words that Scotland, which is also getting lost, but it's one of my favourites is messages. So to say that you're gonna go and do the

**Claire | Kilted English:** Oh yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** shopping, you're gonna go get the messages just try to use that word 'cause I don't think it should disappear 'cause I just think it's a lovely word. The same with piece for a sandwich, which is another word which is disappearing,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm. Which is a, which is they, you know, they use piece to mean a gun in America.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Yes,

**Claire | Kilted English:** I know.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** we're much, we're much more innocent in Scotland,

**Claire | Kilted English:** exactly. Yeah,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** a jammy piece would be a jam sandwich. And I think that's a gorgeous word, which is slowly, well, very, not slowly at all, it's just disappearing. I don't think my son would know what a piece is and I do love that word

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah, no, I'm, yeah. It's something I don't use either or, or messages. I definitely knew it growing up, but I didn't. I don't use it myself anymore.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** I love it

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** I think they're just lovely words. Uh, what was the Ya Dancer. I think that was quite an Edinburgh thing

**Claire | Kilted English:** ya dancer

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Mm-hmm. Ye

**Claire | Kilted English:** Uh, I don't, oh, I thought it was, uh, I don't know, because my dad's from Glasgow and he used to say that,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** ok, is this a Glasgow one?

**Claire | Kilted English:** so, yeah. Yeah. So I think it may be a, it crosses the divide between

Edinburgh and Glasgow, maybe. Yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Glasgow's got some great words, you know, so for people who don't know in Scotland, we have three official languages. So we have English, obviously, we have Scots Gaelic, and we have Scots. And for a very

**Claire | Kilted English:** We,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** time,

**Claire | Kilted English:** mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** there was a

**Claire | Kilted English:** I was gonna say, come in there. We also Yeah, I, I agree with you. I'm gonna come back to that point, but we also have a fourth language, which is British sign language as well,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** of course

**Claire | Kilted English:** so, yes.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** sorry, that's very true actually. And I'm gonna, I have never mentioned that on my. Um, tours, and I'm gonna start adding that in that is a very good point

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah.

<p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> Uh, but yeah, in terms of, of, um, spoken language, Scots, for a long time was debated as to whether it was a language or whether it was dialect. I think there's a wider discussion, you'll probably know more about this than me at the moment in linguistics as to whether <u>dialect</u> is even a thing. they're, if it is just language. Um, but yeah, so it's generally <u>established</u> that Scots is a language. There is a lot of people get a bit angry in the Scot speaking community because Glasgow tends to be the most famous when it comes to Scots words, and it's called the Glasgow patter so there's a lot of words, for example, roaster, which is a great word. It's a great insult. And a</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> I don't know that.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> you never heard of a rooster, a roaster</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> No.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> Trump is quite often described as a roaster.</p> <p>Ah,</p> <p>Um,</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> okay.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> like an absolute, you know, like an idiot, stupid person.</p>	<p>Dialect (noun) /ˈdaɪəlekt/ - the form of a language that is spoken in one area with grammar, words and pronunciation that may be different from other forms of the same language</p> <p>Establish (verb) /ɪˈstæblɪ/ - to discover or prove the facts of a situation</p>	
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You know, it's an absolute roaster. but these kind of words tend to get a lot more. When people talk about Scots, those tend to be the words that come up, which a lot of people say, well that's Glasgow Patter, it tends to get dominated quite a lot by West Coast Words, which I think is interesting, uh, how they work. But there are some really great words in Glasgow as well. We've got general words as well. Lots for getting drunk 'cause there's a big alcohol culture in Scotland.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yes. Yes.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Yeah. And then there's lots of words, you know, in Scots, which tend to get used quite a lot in daily life in, in Scotland, that maybe people won't realise is Scots. I mean, wee is the best example of that to mean small. Um, one of my favourite expressions is courie in. I absolutely love that

**Claire | Kilted English:** Okay.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** So

**Claire | Kilted English:** I don't know that one.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** is, if you're a bit sad and I'm like, come and have a cuddle. You know, like courie in., get some comfort. I really love that word

**Claire | Kilted English:** Is that a Scots word or a

Dominate (verb)

/'dɒmɪneɪt/

- to control or have a lot of influence over somebody/something, especially in an unpleasant way

Gaelic word? Because I don't know.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** that's a Scots word. Yeah. courie in is a Scots word uh, I, I teach that to all my groups. 'cause I, when I want 'em to come closer, I teach them all courie in, so they'll come closer to me

**Claire | Kilted English:** Oh, nice. Yeah, I think as well, like you talk about Scots, but I think there's different Scots around the country as well, because there's different words, vocabulary, um, for all different corners of Scotland. So I think what you're saying about Glasgow having the most famous phrases or words like, I think that it's just because the size of that area and the number of people there, so there's maybe more people speaking that, that, uh, that version if we wanna call it that. Um, but yeah, but they're very closely tied with accents and, and the, the, the Scots language as well. So yeah. I find it fascinating. I really find it fascinating. Yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** the history of Scots is fascinating and I think that, something that people, what, what I thought for a very long time before I ended up doing a deep dive on this, um, was that the impression I had was that Scots was like an ancient language. It wasn't really written down and then kind of got forgotten about in around the 14 hundreds and then got reclaimed at the start of the 20th century for kind of political slash slightly political reasons. And

Reclaim (verb)  
/rɪˈkleɪm/

then also poet, like poets and creatives decided to reclaim it for identity politics. You could argue or identity reasons, but it turns out that towards, even towards the end of the 19th century, there were newspapers publishing in Scots

**Claire | Kilted English:** Huh. Interesting.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** it is really fascinating and Gaelic um. It's probably much more famous for how it was attacked and forced into, you know, kind of regression within the ed, the education system. But the same thing happened to Scots as well, and it was a political decision and an educational decision to get rid of it, and consequently stigmatised the language to this day, it's still seen as something that working class people use uneducated people use Um, and there's a big movement that is working to change it. Um, but the, your accent can also be connected to that as well. And people who sound more Scottish, uh, or use more Scots words, will very often be seen as less educated, less intelligent, uh, lower down in the social hierarchy, um, which is true not just of Scotland. I think all across the UK you see that a lot with, with stronger accents

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah. Mm-hmm. It's sad really, isn't it? Because who, who knows how educated you are, depending on how you speak. Right. It's Or what you speak. Yeah, exactly. It's a, it's a, it's a shame really. It's a shame really. Um,

- to get something back or to ask to have it back after it has been lost, taken away, etc.

Stigmatise (verb)

/'stigmətaɪz/

- to describe or consider somebody/something in a way that unfairly suggests that they are bad or do not deserve respect

Hierarchy (noun)

/'haɪərə:ki/

- a system, especially in a society or an organization, in which people are organized into different levels of importance from highest to lowest

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Do you think, Claire, that that's very unique to the UK or do you think that happens in more countries? Because I do feel it's a very, I mean, obviously Britain is obsessed with class more than lots of other places Um, but I, I do wonder because it is very much, I feel like you open your mouth, um, you're put into a box.

**Claire | Kilted English:** I think, um hmm. I just, from the countries I've lived in, I don't know if it's a thing so much in other countries. I know that, uh, it happens, for example, in Spain, another, it's a, we've got a lot more accents in the UK in terms of the number of accents that you have in Spain, for example. But you can see that there are pockets of Spain where people look down on the, the language or the, the, the way people speak in the same way as they do in in the UK.

But I think that because we've got so many accents across, not just Scotland, but the whole of the UK that, as you say, as soon as you open your mouth, you're, you're judged on how you're, how you're speaking. And, um, I don't think it's unique to the UK, but I think it's in much more depth and maybe, uh, and because we've got that diversity, uh, it, it makes it even stronger almost the, the kind of, uh, prejudice that people might have.

Yeah, it's interesting and sad, but. Let's, uh, yeah, continue to keep the Scots language going. Um, I,

I don't speak a lot of it myself, but, uh, I can understand and I think most English speakers will be under able to understand a lot of it anyway. It's just, uh, perhaps a different pronunciation or, of course we've got different words and everything, but yeah, it's uh, if you put a little bit of effort in, I think so.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** That's what I was gonna say I think it's intension behind it as well, isn't it? That a lot of people say the the same way. Actually, I think a lot of what we're saying here for how people are judged with their accent is the same for people who speak English as a second language. Um, you know, you can be a very good communicator. But if you happen to have the bad luck of speaking to a very close-minded person who is not gonna make any effort to understand you, you're gonna come across that barrier. But I would say as well, it's. It's, it also happens to people that have different accents within the UK too that get, it's nothing to do with your English, it's to do with the person that you've unlucky enough to interact with.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah. Yeah, I have a, an anecdote to, to talk about that. So I was, uh, uh, working on a project in a, in a previous, uh, job. And I had a colleague in Wales and she didn't, she knew I was from Scotland and she was like, okay, she hadn't met me before we went on this call. And then she's like, oh, I worry about your accent. Am I gonna be able to understand you?

And then I thought, I, I met her, and she's like, oh, I understand you fine. I'm like, well, I understand you're fine as well with your Welsh accent. So. You know, it goes both ways. It doesn't, uh, it is not just one accent. So, yeah, absolutely. It's, uh, it's funny.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** uh, when I did my CELTA in, uh, interview, I can't remember if it was, so CELTA is the sort of first qualification you, you get as a English teacher, as a foreign language, and I can't remember if it was at the interview or a bit later and one of the course leaders asked me if my students had Scottish accents. I thought that was one of the most unprofessional things I had ever heard in my life for someone who was leading a teacher training thing. And you know, and I, I sort of like, I, I didn't say too much at the time, but afterwards I was like, I should have asked him if his had English accents,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yes, exactly.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Uh,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** it's really interesting.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Mm-hmm.

**Claire | Kilted English:** talking about teaching then, can you talk about your teaching experience and why did you get into it? We talked about in the introduction about you coming from a family of teachers. So what made you become a teacher?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Well, I always said I would never be a teacher always throughout my entire life. I said, I'm never gonna be a teacher. And, uh,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Oh, what happened?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** I needed a job. Really. Is is the unexciting, uninspiring answer? The, the story does get better though. Um, so I, I'm half Spanish and when I finished my degree, I didn't really know what I wanted to do and I decided I would go to Spain and I would rather, you know, if I had to work in a bar, I'd rather do it in Madrid and, and kind of explore that side of my culture and so I moved to Spain. And I couldn't get a job because, uh, even though I had a lot of experience, uh, I had worked since I was 16 and, know, uh, mainly in hospitality. I had a degree. that, the way that, um, jobs work in Spain is that you don't, you know, people will generally not start working in a more white collar kind of world, until after their degree, and then

it's like an entry level job.

And I needed a, I needed money and the only thing that I could definitely get a job doing was teaching. I knew absolutely nothing, about the English language. I had a degree in English literature. I'd studied English language as part of my degree. Um, but it was much more about kind of like the history of English language more than anything else, or like very deep sentence analysis and But I didn't know what a continuous tense was. I. You know, I remember my interview for my first job and she said, what's the present simple? And I was able to answer that question and then she said, what's the present continuous And I had no idea and I felt very stupid um, this obviously opens up a much wider question about whether native teachers are better

**Claire | Kilted English:** exactly

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** better than non-native teachers. 'cause I can a hundred percent tell you that the first year or first few years I was working, I definitely was not a better teacher but I was a very natural teacher. Um, it came very naturally to me and actually I really enjoyed it. this was also a time in Spain where the government were giving out lots of like subsidised courses and there was a lot of questionable

Subsidise (verb)

/ˈsʌbsɪdaɪz/

- to give money to somebody or an organization to help pay for something

Questionable (adjective)

/ˈkwɛstʃənəbl/

- likely to be dishonest or morally wrong

- To give a subsidy



**Claire | Kilted English:** a big push

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** academies coming through. Yes, there people that were taking that money and starting these businesses and there was a lot of, it was very easy to get a job, like they were desperate for people. So I sort of started like that and then eventually I ended up working for, um. a much better school. Did you work for them,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Cambridge House? Were you, was it you that

**Claire | Kilted English:** No, I worked in International House when I was in Spain. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** so I worked for a company called Cambridge House, and they were a really lovely company to work for. I worked for them for a long time. They did a lot of training as well which was very nice. Um, then I decided to do my celta I did a bit more formal training. I eventually did my dip tsol. Um. Which is like the more advanced teacher training. I fell into it unintentionally, uh, but discovered I really, really loved it and, um, began teaching English. It's evolved a lot over the years now, however, uh, I do things very differently and I, I don't even think I would call myself an English teacher now, to be perfectly honest Um, I mainly now teach, well, in terms of more traditional concepts of

English lessons I teach online and I only teach a group class for the Cambridge proficiency exam preparation

**Claire | Kilted English:** which is a whole different ball game as well.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** which is a whole different ball game. So the people that I work with at that level, I mean, their English is incredible. I personally don't think they need a certification, but they do. I. so I, for whatever reason, and I help them get that, and a lot of that, I mean, a lot of the things we do, uh, I think you would find a lot of native speakers, extremely hard pressed to be able to produce the language that these people do. Uh. Um, I do that work now. For a long time, I did a lot with pronunciation as well. I was very interested. Um, I still find it interesting how English pronunciation works. but I don't, it's not really what I do anymore because of the level of the people that I work with. And then I also do what I call cultural immersion. so, rather than teaching English, I teach in English, and the idea behind this first and foremost is not really language proficiency. we work with young kids from teenagers from all over Europe. Um, and my main goal uh, to kind of create global citizens. um, we want to put kids in a different cultural situation. Uh, I think by learning different cultures you can learn more about your own and with the way the world is at the moment, um, I think that's a really important. That's, thing that

First and foremost (idiom)  
- more than anything else

we need to do. I think things like social media, for example. Um, all kinds of media really, uh, newspapers, everything are pushing people into one place or another. and it's not leaving space for conversations to happen in the in-between area, which if we want to have good communication, good relationships, a better world, that's what has to happen a lot of what we do is critical thinking work with them. Um, it's looking for example, at bad things about Scotland's history, like our connection with the slave trade or,

**Claire | Kilted English:** Yep.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** uh, the witch hunts in Scotland thinking about how we deal with difficult parts of history. We talk quite a lot about politics, actually, um, about how politics works in their country. We talk about identity, we work with art. We do these amazing workshops with the National Gallery here in Edinburgh, which are fantastic. Um, and also it's about showing the kids, what they can do already with the language they have. Right? it's about good communication, being able to use, work with what you have. You don't have to be a proficient speaker to be a strong communicator. we do a lot of work with that. And I, I mean, for me personally, I have a lot of issues with the English teaching world. I feel, uh, that a lot of it is. And I don't think we can deny it. It's connected to colonialism and it's connected to racism, and it's

Colonialism (noun)

/kə'ləʊniəlɪzəm/

- the practice by which a powerful country controls another country or other countries

<p>connected to classism based on the kind of teachers that people have. The kind of English that is taught, uh, the way that international exams work. It's an industry and I don't feel it's an industry that wants to change, um, which is why I'm kind of stepping back from it. and there are some amazing people who are doing amazing work trying to change it, and I think it's brilliant for them. But, um, it's not where I want to be now. So I, I'm I would definitely still describe myself as an educator. Uh, but yeah, moving in a slightly different way and the way that I think about English in general, how people learn it, is, has changed a lot. Well I mean, to give you a simple example, this, it's, you know, the way the international exams are graded with basic language and advanced language I mean, all of that is an artificial construct. So the way that that is done is not based on research or how long it takes you to learn language or any of these things. It's based on when you are a beginner, you learn certain structures and words, and those are considered basic. And as you advance, you learn others, and they're considered more advanced. But cognitively, if you think about what your brain is doing when it's making a comparative structure, which is insane, all the things you have to remember, right? To make a comparative in English, it's insane. And compare that to something very advanced, like an inversion. why is it that my C2 level proficiency speakers do inversions like that, but sometimes still <u>trip up on</u> comparative structures. So, you</p>	<p>Trip up on something (idiom) - Have difficulties with something</p>	
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<p>know, there's, I have a lot of issues with this. It gets me angry. I don't want to be angry, so I'm trying to just kind of take myself away and move into different things. And like I said before, I, I'm, I'm, um, also a guide. So that's kind of the other thing that I'm working with, Moving into to guiding and telling Scotland's story and being an ambassador for all of Scotland.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Yes, exactly. And yeah, I think, I think with that and the work that you've done leading up to that, uh, there's a lot of crossover, you know, with the, the immersion work. The guiding work. Um, and yeah, even if you in the future have, uh. Uh, people that you're guiding whose first language is not English,</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> For sure</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> all, the work that you've done before that is just gonna be so useful for that, for that next step. So, yes, sounds really good.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> 'cause I think it's very good to, to be able to explain things clearly, simply And, uh, <u>succinctly</u> and that's a very difficult thing to do,</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> but when you've been working with people who, um, have to process it in a second language, you know, you</p>		
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Succinctly (adverb)

/səkˈsɪŋktli/

- using only a few words that state something clearly

really have to think about that. So that's a skill that's definitely very useful, has transferred over very, very well.

**Claire | Kilted English:** And I don't know about you. Um, sometimes when I, um. Because of the teaching I had done, I had, and I used to work with very low levels. I loved working with A1 students, um, very beginning level students. Um, that I simplified my own language so much that sometimes for me to make a more complicated sentence was really hard

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Yes.

**Claire | Kilted English:** in my own language, which is just ridiculous. But yeah. Uh. Hopefully I, I've, I've come out of that a little bit into the, uh, back into my own language a little bit. But anyway, um, I've got one last question for, for you today. Uh, so what advice would you give to learners of English who want to come to visit Scotland or come to live in Scotland?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** What advice in terms of how

**Claire | Kilted English:** It could be.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** or

**Claire | Kilted English:** exactly. Or, um, it could be where recommendations, what things like

that. Where would you

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** So in terms

**Claire | Kilted English:** go?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** of understanding people, you're gonna get a shock and just come accepting that. And it's it's not, uh, to say that your level of English isn't good 'cause it will be It's just that, first of all, you've not been exposed to that accent and that way of talking and exposure is so important. So, if you

**Claire | Kilted English:** And the speed, I think.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** absolutely. go to Liverpool, you're gonna have the same problem. You go to London, you're gonna have the same everywhere will have different accents. And it's challenging. And the way people speak of course, is faster. And yeah. So just be prepared to experience that Make it, don't let it make you feel bad about your level. you mentioned Edinburgh Castle before. It's not my favourite castle in Scotland

**Claire | Kilted English:** I agree. It's not my favourite castle either

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** but in Edinburgh we

<p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Well.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> Secret Castle, which is one of my</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> This is, oh, I'm excited that we, we might have the same favourite castle. You tell me and I'll tell you</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> Mine's Craigmillar Castle.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Yes. Mine too.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> It's one of my favourites. In Scotland, Dunottar is another of my favourites</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Mm-hmm.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> And Stirling, I love Stirling Castle, but if you're in Edinburgh. You know, have a look at Edinburgh Castle from the outside 'cause it's grand. But go to Craigmillar Castle. You'll probably be there by yourself, it costs <u>a fraction of</u> the price. You'll definitely get a ticket you'll be in the most beautiful park as well. there on the bus. Um, Craigmillar Castle's always one of my favourite places to visit. The</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> I also, oh yeah. Can I go back to Craigmillar Castle? I took my parents, I took my parents there once and uh, they had</p>	<p>Fraction (noun) /'frækʃn/ - a small part or amount of something</p>	
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some clothes that you could put on so that you could look like a Tudor or something like that, or whatever. Not Tudor,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** as well,

**Claire | Kilted English:** you'd be this be a Stuart, you know? Yeah, exactly. So, and I think that. Edinburgh castle is overrated and there's lots of people there, so it's crowded all the time. And yeah, I think Craigmillar is just so much nicer and you can get a feel of how life might actually have been

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** You can clamber around

**Claire | Kilted English:** like in that castle.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** it and you can explore it. I went with a friend, we got dressed up. We did a photo shoot there. It was great fun. Um. I take school groups all the time to Craigmillar 'cause it's one of, I think, the best places to visit. And it's, it's just stunning It's such a gorgeous place. yeah, the other sort of place that a lot of people don't go to, well, first of all is the New Town actually. Lots of people visit the Old Town, which is fantastic and it's beautiful. But the, uh, one of the most unique things about Edinburgh is that it's got two UNESCO World Heritage sites right beside each other. You have the Old Town and the New Town. The New Town

Overrate (verb)

/ˌəʊvə'reɪt/

- to have too high an opinion of somebody/something; to put too high a value on somebody/something

is one of the best examples of Georgian architecture you're gonna see anywhere in the world. It's also really quiet because the Old Town is jammed and you can go absolutely ho. There's a good word, hoachin. Uh, and it's, um. just gorgeous. The elegance, the it is beautiful. And there you can go visit a place called the Georgian House, That's one of my favourite places to visit in Edinburgh as well,

**Claire | Kilted English:** I, I never got there, unfortunately. But

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** so good. If you've got the time, I'd go to Gladstone's Land on the Royal Mile which is a 16th century tenement house. And then come to the 18th century, Georgian House, uh, and compare the two 'cause that's really great. So those are, uh, definitely one of those two. And go to the Museum of Scotland, the National Museum 'cause it's absolutely fantastic. But spend some time in the Scottish section as well. 'cause it's, uh, it's super. Strolling around the graveyards, another of my favourite things to do. But the one that a lot of people don't go to is, uh, new Calton Burial Ground, the one on Regent's Road.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Behind the, um, Scottish government building,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** yeah,

**Claire | Kilted English:** that right?

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** no, that's, I think that's Old Calton Cemetery ,

**Claire | Kilted English:** okay.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** and if you keep walking past the Burns Monument

**Claire | Kilted English:** Okay. Okay.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** You get to New Calton Cemetery and that you can go down there to get to Holyrood Palace and the views you're gonna get walking down are insane. They're just absolutely beautiful. I could do this for a very

**Claire | Kilted English:** Amazing.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** long time because, uh, this is what I do for a job. So we could do another three hour podcast where I tell you all the places you should go and visit in Edinburgh.

**Claire | Kilted English:** I would love that too. I would love that too. But yeah.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** Old College. Go and see Old college. I do a lot of Harry Potter tours and I,

**Claire | Kilted English:** the, and, um, oh, what's the square called? Jordan. Oh, well you got the round building McEwan Hall. Is that what you

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** So

**Claire | Kilted English:** No.

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** beside the Mound and it's the very big gothic kind tower and that's part of the university as well but it's stunning. And in my headcanon, that is Hogwart's Everyone says that it's George Herriot's. It's not, by the way, she's on the record as having said none of that is true yeah, if you want the kind of real Hogwarts vibes, then go and check out the, the old college. That would be my, top tip.

**Claire | Kilted English:** Amazing. Okay. Well thank you very much for, for talking to me today. It's been fascinating and as I said,

**Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:** This

**Claire | Kilted English:** could talk to you for hours. Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I'll just say thanks. For, um, being on the episode today and, um, for people who are listening or watching. Um, if you've enjoyed the episode, do subscribe and share and also comment. What was your favourite part of our discussion. Um, ask us questions. Claire will probably, hopefully be happy to answer questions as well. Um, also, I

<p>will, uh. Put into the description. I'll put a link to this transcript of this, today's episode as well, so you can download that and I will highlight some of the more advanced, uh, grammar and vocabulary, uh, for you as well.</p> <p><b>Claire - The Edinburgh Experience:</b> and all those Scottish words as well.</p> <p><b>Claire   Kilted English:</b> Exactly. I'm gonna have to get my Scots dictionary out, so yeah. Okay. Thanks very much. And I will, I'll see you later pals. Bye.</p>		
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