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This new edition surveys the major approaches and methods in language teaching.

The British Council has been flexible in moving its attention and resources to match new UK priorities, particularly in the Islamic World and the Far East. It continues to implement numerous and extensive internal changes aimed at increasing its effectiveness and efficiency, though delivery of projects and change has been uneven across its global network. The Council’s approach to measuring its performance is well developed. Its scorecard shows positive results across most aspects of activity, including audience sizes, customer satisfaction scores, and the perceptions of stakeholders and partners.The Council increasingly depends on contributions from external partners and commercial sponsors, to expand its activities and impacts. This will mean reversing the downward trend in sponsorship and other contributions of the last six years. The Council has recognised the importance of good customer service, but it is not yet meeting the standards it sets for itself across the whole network. It also needs to implement a customer database to enable it to track customer contacts and better understand its audiences.The British Council’s £181 million English language teaching and examinations business has a strong reputation and more than covers its costs. The teaching operation also supports UK public diplomacy, notably by helping overseas governments expand the teaching of English in their schools and colleges.But the teaching business has a high cost base, charges premium prices, and has limited reach outside overseas capital cities. Although there has been an increase in the numbers of students taught, the network of teaching centres has contracted in recent years. To continue to grow the business, the Council will need to put into action its ideas about alternative lower-cost ways to deliver good quality teaching.

This report (HC 814, session 2007-08, ISBN 9780215525468) looks at the work of the British Council and what impact the Council has working with whole societies, how it makes best use of resources and their efforts to increase consistency across the British Council network. It follows an NAO report (HCP 625, session 2007-08, ISBN 9780102954173), on the same topic. The British Council is a Registered Charity and an executive Non-Departmental Public Body as well as a Public Corporation. It aims to build relationships between people in the UK and other countries, through teaching English and running cultural projects. It operates in over 110 countries and engages with over 15 million people a year worldwide. The Committee has set out a number of conclusions and recommendations, including: that the British Council should be congratulated for its achievements in promoting the English language and culture overseas; the Committee believes though that the current teaching model, based on premium prices and concentrated mainly in capital cities, severely restricts its reach; that the Council’s recent programme of change has had a negative effect on staff and their view of the Council’s leadership; the Council is without a single customer relationship management system, which it is now going to address; that sponsorship and partner income has fallen year on year since 2000-01, and the Council should do more to reverse this trend; the Committee has identified a lack of consistency across the network.

The British Council is the UK’s international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. Its purpose is to “build engagement and trust for the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people worldwide.” As well as education, it runs programmes in the arts, science, sport, governance and English language in 110 countries and territories worldwide. 2009 marked the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Council. It receives Grant-in-Aid from the FCO for its public diplomacy activity: £209 million 2008-09, a 6% increase from 2007-08. The Committee concludes that the change in extent of data provided and the presentation of that data in the British Council’s 2008-09 annual report makes it more difficult to track and evaluate the Council’s performance over a period of years. In future the annual report should include fuller performance data, including corporate performance scores and reach, to facilitate year-on-year analysis. The recent decline in some of the scores achieved in relation to quality of service, particularly in that relating to engagement with decision makers and senior influencers, gives cause for concern. The Committee welcomes the Council’s efforts to re-establish itself in Iran and Zimbabwe, its increased focus on China, and its progress in implementing NAO suggested administrative reforms (HC 625, session 2007-08, ISBN 9780102954173). 2009-10 will be a difficult year for the British Council and further cuts in staff and services may be unavoidable. In these circumstances it is important that the Council concentrates its activities on its core business and key objectives.

This report calls on VisitBritain and Visit Wales to jointly develop, by February 2015, a coherent strategy for promoting Wales as a first choice destination for international visitors to the UK. While the current number of international tourists to Wales remains below pre-2006 levels, there is substantial potential for growth in Wales’ tourism market. Wales has some of the most spectacular landscape in Britain and Europe, a unique culture, language and history, dynamic cities, and offers a range of activities and a high quality of life. Wales’ potential as a tourist destination is being undersold and there is concern that Wales still has a low profile overseas compared to other parts of the UK The tourism bodies Wales need to grasp this opportunity and maximise Wales’ potential as a destination. UKTI should be mandated to begin to address the great disparities in wealth and investment across the UK, and the Committee calls for a dedicated Welsh trade promotion agency, to drive inward investment into Wales. Wales has masses of unfulfilled potential for increasing tourism. The responsible agencies in Cardiff and London and the respective Ministers need to work together more to maximise opportunities

In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, and with British political influence over Greece soon to be ceded to the United States, there was nonetheless a degree of cultural interaction between Greek and British literati. Sponsored or assisted by the British Council, this interaction was notable for its diversity and quality alike. Indeed, the British Council in Greece made a more significant contribution to local culture in that period than at any other time, and perhaps in any other country. Many of the participants – among them Patrick Leigh Fermor, Steven Runciman, and Louis MacNeice – are well known, while others deserve to be better known than they are today. But what has been less fully discussed, and what the volume sets out to do, is to explore the two-way relations between Greek and British literary production in which the British Council played a particularly important role until the outbreak of armed conflict in Cyprus in 1955, which rendered further contacts of this kind difficult. Close attention is paid to the variety of ways - marked by personal affinities and allegiances, but also by political tensions - in which the British Council functioned as an agent of interaction in a climate where a complex blend of traditional Anglophilia or Philhellenism found itself encountering a new post-war and Cold War environment. What is distinctive about the volume, beyond the inclusion of much recent archival research, is its attention to the British Council as part of the story of Greek letters, and not just as a place in which various British men and women of letters worked. The British Council found itself, sometimes more through improvisation and personal affinities, rather than through careful planning, at the heart of some key developments, notably in terms of important periodical publications which had a lasting influence on Greek letters. Though in the cultural forum that influence was arguably to be less pervasive than that of France, with its more ambitious cultural outreach, or than that of the USA in later decades, the role of the British Council in Greece in this crucial period of Greek (and indeed European) post-war history continues to make a rich case study in cultural politics. This volume thus fills a gap in the rich bibliography on Anglo-Greek relations and contributes to a wider scholarly and public discussion about cultural politics.

Seminar paper from the year 2007 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1.0, University of Freiburg, course: Proseminar Contemporary Britain, 15 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: While Scotland and Wales slowly dissociate from a community that had served its purpose in times of crisis (among them World War I and II, and, more recently, the Falkland War of 1982) as well as in the global context of the British Empire, England is left with a dilemma: Before the backdrop of a potential division of Britain, how can the English reinvent themselves and find their own specific identity? This paper will be concerned with English identity and shed some light on the question of whether or not we can speak of Britishness as incorporating a specific notion of Englishness. When in 1997 a majority of the Scottish public voted in favour of forming a Scottish Parliament endowed with its own (limited) legislative competence, it became increasingly clear that Britain would undergo a process of national transformation in the years to come that would change the country irrevocably. The shadow of devolution had fallen over what has always been the political and economic pivot of the Union: Looming in a distance could be discerned the first harrowing signs of a disintegration that would gradually weaken national cohesion within Britain and sever the bonds that had held the nation together for more than three centuries. In 1707 the Kingdom of Scotland had been married to the Kingdom of England by parliamentary acts that came to be known as the Acts of Union; historically, however, both countries had been ruled by a single monarch ever since the Union of the Crowns, dating back to 1603. Nowadays, the debate about national sovereignty is being rehashed; to many people, especially those living in the English regions, and among them a considerable number of politicians, the drastic developments are more than just a nuisance. While Scotland and Wales slowly dissociate from a community that had served its purpose in times of crisis (among them World War I and II, and, more recently, the Falkland War of 1982) as well as in the global context of the British Empire, England is left with a dilemma: Before the backdrop of a potential division of Britain, how can the English reinvent themselves and find their own specific identity?

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