

Inglês II
Exame Época de Recurso
29 June 2010
Time allowed: 2 hours

A. Writing (12.5 points)

Consider the situation described in the excerpt below, which was taken from an article in the *Financial Times*, published 15 July 2008.

Airbus is hampered by cultural differences

By Peggy Hollinger in Paris and Gerrit Wiesmann in Frankfurt

... [T]empers are flaring on the shop floor over the emergency measures that have been adopted to get the first double-decker jets out of the hangar. Among them is the arrival in Toulouse of 2,000 German electricians to resolve the cabling problems that originated in their own Hamburg factory two years ago. Their presence on the final assembly line – where French workers normally fit together almost-completed parts of the aircraft – has sparked strong tensions in a factory already at capacity with its own 1,500 workers.

Unions say streamlined processes have been replaced by a do-it-yourself system that is stretching the patience of factory workers and threatening the group's ability to meet delivery targets. ...

Mario Heinen, last week promoted to run the cabin and fuselage cross-border division after two years heading the A380 programme, admits the pressure to keep up with intense production schedules and the overcrowded conditions have not made things easy. "We have been working on these initial aircraft in a handmade way. It is not a perfectly organised industrial process." But there was no choice. "We have delivered five high-quality aircraft this way. If we had left the work in Hamburg, to wait for a new wiring design, we would not have delivered one by now."

Mr Heinen rejects suggestions that the tensions stem from any inability of the French and Germans to work together. "People get nervous when things do not go as they should do. Yes, there are exchanges and yes, there are differences of views. But afterwards we find a solution."

Hannes Mechler and Jean-Pierre Guizerix are on the front line of these exchanges. They lead German and French teams on the second wave of aircraft to be fitted in Toulouse, where some problems have been resolved. They too say that the going has been tough at times. "The industrial process is very ramshackle," says Mr Guizerix. "We are in deep shit." The two men are frank about the fact that cultural differences have aggravated the effects of overcrowding on the assembly line.

Mr Guizerix, with his pink T-shirt and pierced ear, glances over at Mr Mechler's neat button-down shirt and slacks. "We shout a lot. At the beginning the Germans were very surprised by the way we work. It is rugby management," he says. French teams also found German working habits difficult to get used to. "They need everything written down. We just work it out as we go."

Mr Mechler agrees that the French temperament is difficult for Germans to understand. "We don't shout. It is not the German way," he says. But neither is the kissing French colleagues engage in first thing in the morning. "We Germans come into work first thing in the morning a bit like this" He shuffles along with his head bowed and tips a cursory nod to Mr Guizerix.

Mr Guizerix acknowledges, joking aside, that there was frustration on the French side that German teams seemed less efficient. But the reasons were obvious, he says. "The big difference at the beginning was that the French teams knew each other. We knew everyone's strong and weak points, how they worked. The Germans had never worked together. It was a new process and they were far from home. Before teams can work together, they have to know each other. It is no different in any company."

In light of the four types of obstacles to the working of effective multicultural teams (direct vs indirect communication, different attitudes towards hierarchy, problems with accents and fluency, and different approaches to decision making), which we studied, identify the problem(s) involved and propose an appropriate managerial strategy to overcome it(them).

Write a text (as if it were a brief report) in answer to the prompt above (1 - 1½ pages). Your text will be marked on relevance of content, clarity of organisation and flow of information, range and appropriacy of structures, vocabulary and expression, and grammatical accuracy.

B. Reading comprehension (6.5 points)

Read the text then choose the best answer on p 3 to complete each statement or question.

Not only Anglo-Saxons erred

By Stefan Stern

1 Has narrow, monocultural management led us all to disaster? There are those who will tell you it has. Nouriel Roubini, for example. The professor of economics at New York University put forward this view in the Financial Times a couple of weeks ago.

5 In the financial world, our lousy "Anglo-Saxon" system of supervision and regulation had in practice meant no regulation at all, he said. His comments prompted the arresting headline: "The Anglo-Saxon model has failed". Prof Roubini is not Anglo-Saxon. He was born in Istanbul to Iranian-Jewish parents. As a child he lived in Tehran, Tel Aviv and Milan, and speaks four languages. For once, the word polyglot really is justified. And "Dr Doom", as he has been irreverently labelled, is entitled to express his opinions with confidence. He forecast our current
10 difficulties more accurately, and sooner, than most. So perhaps we need to ask not only if narrowness is bad, but also whether Prof Roubini's multicultural background has been crucial in helping him to form better judgments.

I should declare an interest. I am not terribly Anglo-Saxon either. "You may be British," as a former colleague once told me, not unkindly, "but you will never be English." (It's true: my
15 roots are more middle European than middle England.) And some readers will doubtless criticise **my** less than historically or ethnically precise use of the term Anglo-Saxon. But it has become a popular short-hand expression to describe an Anglo-American way of doing business.

In his book *The Truth About Markets*, my colleague John Kay analyses and debunks what he calls the "American business model" (ABM). Published in 2003 in the wake of the dotcom
20 crash, the book is remarkably prescient – beating even Dr Doom – in its criticisms of the ABM and its built-in flaws.

"[The ABM] remains the working hypothesis of most business people and consultants," Mr Kay writes. But, he argues, **it** is mistaken in its core belief that greed can be a benign and sustainable force. He cites the economists Ken Arrow and Frank Hahn, who asked in 1971: "What will an
25 economy motivated by greed and controlled by a very large number of different agents look like?" The economists answered their own question: "There will be chaos."

We need to qualify this criticism a little. First, as Mr Kay acknowledges, great American businesses have not, paradoxically, usually been exponents of the ABM. Great American (and British) businesses have not tried to generate the largest possible profits in the short term at the
30 expense of doing long-term harm to the organisation. The second qualification is starker. Of course, many Anglo-Saxon businesses are in trouble, and they have brought a lot of their problems on themselves. But what about non-Anglo-Saxon businesses – how well are they doing? And can all their problems really be blamed on *les sales anglo-saxons*?

Leadership and management are practised in different cultural contexts. Globalisation has
35 not reduced the need for managers on the ground to be sensitive to local communities, to understand their employees and their customers. On the contrary, we need managers who are more, not less, culturally aware. One Anglo-Saxon size does not fit all, and nor does one Japanese, German or Indian one either. The vast "Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness" (Globe) study, launched in 1991 by Robert House of the Wharton school of
40 business in Pennsylvania, has now researched more than 60 societies around the world. **Its** findings? Successful leaders respond to the values, norms and beliefs of the people being led.

What doesn't work, in a global age, is seeking to preserve the purity of a narrow ethnic identity, and refusing to recognise the qualities that other cultures offer. President Barack Obama, who has a rich ethnic background, has called himself "a mutt". **It** does not seem to have done him
45 too much harm. Variety is good. I'm biased, of course, but don't you think that England without its Celts, Normans, Jews, Huguenots, Asians, Afro-Caribbeans and the rest sounds like a pretty dismal prospect? It would have been awful: Sweden without the sex. For the time being, though, almost everyone seems to have it in for the Anglo-Saxons.

No sphere of human activity escapes critical attention. In the UK at the moment we are roughly
50 half-way through the annual Six Nations rugby union championship (Italy and France are the continental interlopers who compete alongside the four home countries). When the England rugby team runs out on to the pitch to play Wales at Cardiff's Millennium stadium, as it did the other week, you get to see how intense national rivalries can be. "You can feel the venom towards the England team," as one of the BBC's commentators put it. Indeed, was I imagining it, or could I
55 just make out that traditional Welsh cry of "Twtl din bob sais!" rising above the roar of the crowd?

56 **That's** Welsh for "the Anglo-Saxon model has failed", by the way. More or less.

Financial Times, 15 July 2008

Choose the best answer to complete the sentence or to answer the question. (0.5 points each)

1. What is meant by the title, 'Not only Anglo-Saxons erred'?

- a. Although many Anglo-Saxon businesses have not been doing well, businesses from other countries have been doing well;
- b. Any business – Anglo-Saxon or otherwise – that adopted monocultural management practices will have had problems;
- c. Both Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American business models have failed.

2. What does the writer imply about Nouriel Roubini?

- a. Nouriel Roubini has a different perspective from his American colleagues probably because he has a multicultural background;
- b. Nouriel Roubini probably likes the Anglo-American attitude towards management practices;
- c. The fact that Nouriel Roubini is a professor of economics at New York University gives him credibility to make statements about management.

3. What is the central tenet of the American Business Model?

- a. Most business people and consultants use it;
- b. It is possible to continually make large profits without hurting others;
- c. Anglo-American business practices are the most efficient.

4. Which sentence is true according to the text?

- a. One of the results of globalisation is that managers need be more culturally sensitive;
- b. Globalisation has diffused the American Business Model throughout the world so that all businesses use it;
- c. Successful great British businesses have adopted the American Business Model.

5. What did Obama mean when he called himself "a mutt"?

- a. He was not brought up in the U.S.A.;
- b. He has a multicultural background;
- c. He is like a dog that has no fixed home.

6. According to John Kay the American Business Model

- a. might be efficient in the long term but could never be so in the short term;
- b. was imperfect from the beginning;
- c. both a. and b.

7. Which sentence best summarises the article?

- a. Companies whose managers follow the American Business Model will be less successful than those that don't;
- b. There is a growing concern that globalisation has led to increased multiculturalism in working environments and managers must respond to this;
- c. Businesses can no longer follow monocultural management practices if they wish to remain competitive and successful.

8. The writer

- a. totally agrees with Nouriel Roubini's view that the American Business Model's management practices are responsible for the economic crisis;
- b. has reservations about Nouriel Roubini's view that the American Business Model's management practices are responsible for the economic crisis;
- c. argues that Nouriel Roubini would like more regulation and supervision in the financial world.

What do the following words or expressions (in **bold** in the text) refer to? (0.5 points each)

9. **my** (line 16);

10. **it** (line 23);

11. **Its** (line 40);

12. **It** (line 44);

13. **That** (line 56)

C. Vocabulary (1 point)

The following sentences were taken from *The Financial Times*. Complete the sentences with an appropriate word or expression. You will need to conjugate verbs and/or may have to add a preposition. A paraphrase of the meaning and the first letter have been given to help you. (0.2 points each)

1. Microsoft is set to **l...** a free online version of its widely used Office software next week. (begin selling [a new product])
11 June 2010
2. Hard-pressed consumers moved **d...** to conserve cash. (to buy cheaper products with less quality)
11 April 2010
3. You may also want to speak to a **m...** if you have one – this is exactly what they are there for. Bear in mind that employment law differs from country to country. (a person who gives help and advice, particularly that which is job-related)
30 May 2010
4. Industry consultants say that some Chinese carmakers are taking advantage of the crisis in the global industry to **h...** executives from western manufacturers. (find suitable [candidates] for specific jobs)
1 Jan 2010
5. Small company bosses are increasingly reliant on **p...-r... p...** or bonuses, according to the latest survey of the 250 or so companies in the FTSE SmallCap index. (a rate of pay that depends on how well a person does his/her job)
12 May 2008

C. Vocabulary (1 point)

The following sentences were taken from *The Financial Times*. Complete the sentences with an appropriate word or expression. You will need to conjugate verbs and/or may have to add a preposition. A paraphrase of the meaning and the first letter have been given to help you. (0.2 points each)

6. Microsoft is set to **launch** a free online version of its widely used Office software next week. (begin selling [a new product])
11 June 2010
7. Hard-pressed consumers moved **downmarket** to conserve cash. (to buy cheaper products with less quality)
11 April 2010
8. You may also want to speak to a **mentor** if you have one – this is exactly what they are there for. Bear in mind that employment law differs from country to country. (a person who gives help and advice, particularly that which is job-related)
30 May 2010
9. Industry consultants say that some Chinese carmakers are taking advantage of the crisis in the global industry to **headhunt** executives from western manufacturers. (find suitable [candidates] for specific jobs)
1 Jan 2010
10. Small company bosses are increasingly reliant on **performance-related pay** or bonuses, according to the latest survey of the 250 or so companies in the FTSE SmallCap index. (a rate of pay that depends on how well a person does his/her job)
12 May 2008