

Lesson 2

VW's surprise job-slashing deal is a big win for its bosses

大众汽车意外裁员协议：管理层的一场大胜

And a blow to Germany's co-operative model of industrial relations

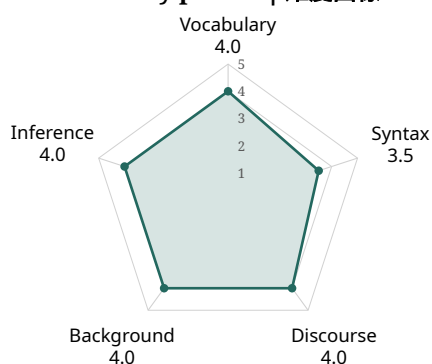
也是对德国合作式劳资关系模式的一记重击

The Economist · September 4th 2026 · Berlin



The VW skyscraper in Lower Saxony, Germany. Photograph: DPA.

Difficulty profile | 难度画像



词汇、句法、篇章、背景、推理与修辞。

1–5分；越向外，阅读负担越高。

难度：CRS R4+（暂定） 原文约 B2+–C1；建议具备 B2 阅读基础。

适用读者：能阅读普通英语新闻，希望进入深度商业评论的本科高年级学生、商务英语学习者及自学者。

学习安排：精读可分两次完成，合计约90–120分钟；作文与口头讨论选做。等级、评分及用时均为编辑估计。

Before you read 读前思考

If workers help to make a company's major decisions, will it be easier or harder to cut jobs? Keep this question in mind as you read the article.

员工也参与公司重大决策时，裁员会更容易还是更困难？带着这个问题读课文，留意作者为何把一份达成了共识的协议称为对合作模式的打击。

About this lesson 本课导读

先通读课文，再查阅生词和注释；遇到长句，可按 K 编号找到句型讲解。完成理解题与摘要后，再核对参考译文。重点不只是知道协议的内容，还要读懂作者怎样从“达成协议”转向“问题尚未解决”。

P为段落，V为词汇，K为句型。电子版点击编号可在课文与讲解间往返；词表中的★表示本课优先练习的表达。参考答案与解析见书末（第14页起），完成练习后可对照检查。

Text 课文

[P1] The casual observer might interpret^{V01} the agreement on September 3rd between Volkswagen's management and trade unions as *Mitbestimmung* (co-determination) in action. In fact, far from^{V02 K01} epitomising^{V03} the long-standing German model of harmonious accord^{V04} between bosses and employees, the unexpected deal, which involves the loss of 50,000 jobs, may signal the beginning of its end. The carmaker's powerful unions and employees' representatives agreed to it only when^{K02} the bosses threatened to bypass^{V05} the system altogether.

[P2] Workers hold a strong hand on VW's 20-strong supervisory board, which is empowered to approve strategic action. Their representatives hold ten seats. Another two are occupied by VW's home state of Lower Saxony. The state has a 20% voting stake in the firm and—under the Volkswagen Act, a law passed in 1960—can veto^{V06} decisions of which^{K03} it disapproves. Both have been determined to preserve jobs in Germany. In recent years management has been determined to cut them and the exorbitant^{V07} costs they entail.

[P3] Approval of "Future Plan 2030" opens the way for factory closures in Germany. The job cuts are on top of^{V08} the same number culled^{V09} under a deal struck in 2024. The latest pact^{V10} was secured only after it appeared that VW's bosses had threatened to circumvent^{V11} the supervisory board and appeal directly to shareholders—a nuclear option to which they had never before resorted. A rumour that VW was considering phasing out^{V12} its SEAT brand may have added to the pressure.

[P4] Trashing co-determination, of which VW has long been considered the exemplar^{V13}, is a measure of managers' desperation. In past decades, when the German firm vied^{V14} with Toyota for leadership of the global car industry, profitability came a poor second^{V15} in importance to scale. And when other European carmakers shifted production to lower-cost countries in eastern Europe, unions hindered VW's ability to do the same. They are said to have insisted^{K04} that every job created abroad be matched by one in Germany.

[P5] VW's over-reliance on costly German workers and factories became first a problem and then a crisis. Since 2019 annual sales have slipped by 2m vehicles, to around 9m in 2025, as competition from Chinese carmakers has swiftly intensified both in China and abroad. Herbert Diess, VW's previous boss, an outsider employed in part to take on^{V16} the unions and cut costs, made little impression. Oliver Blume, an insider who took over in September 2022, was expected to make even less progress.

Text 课文 (续)

[P6] Now Mr Blume seems to have pulled off^{V17} the biggest achievement of his career. The agreement appears to close what Bernstein, a broker, had said looked like^{K05} an “unbridgeable^{V18} gap” between management and workers. The most contentious^{V19} part involves closing four factories in Germany between 2031 and 2034 to reduce annual capacity by 500,000 units (or
35 finding alternative uses for the plants, which seems unlikely). VW will also narrow and simplify its line-up of vehicles and cut capital investment and its research-and-development budget by even more than previously planned.

[P7] Mr Blume has thus won VW time to^{K06} turn itself around^{V20}. Investors seem to agree: VW’s share price surged early on September 4th. But it is time that he must make the most of^{V21}.
40 VW has a target of 9% for its operating margin in 2030, compared with less than 4% now, and still has plenty of problems to surmount^{V22} if it is to come close.

[P8] Although^{K07} its electric vehicles (EVs) are improving, its earlier forays^{V23} were hardly met with widespread acclaim^{V24}. Big investments in in-house software development have yielded^{V25} little; VW now relies on Rivian, an American startup, and Xpeng, a Chinese one,
45 for such technology. Plans for the sort of software-defined vehicle platform common among Chinese firms are years behind schedule. That is one reason why VW’s sales in China are still sliding. EVs make up only a small fraction of its business in the country, even though electrified cars account for around three-fifths of the market.

[P9] A bigger worry may be whether VW’s unions are genuinely committed to change. Already Daniela Cavallo, the chief of VW’s works council (which represents employees), has
50 said: “We’ve given up on no plant and, contrary to media reports, no plant closure has been approved.” In December 2024 VW backed down^{V26} from a plan to close three German factories after workers went on strike.

[P10] Even so, in threatening to circumvent the supervisory board, Mr Blume has found a powerful weapon with which to force concessions^{V27}. This may be the start of a new era at VW. It
55 could be one of greater co-operation between bosses and workers—or of^{K08} further industrial strife^{V28}.

First question Why does the writer call the deal a win for management, but not a solution to all of VW's problems?

New words and expressions 生词和短语

按课文出现顺序排列，保留音标、词性与本课词义。*为优先练习项；用法和例句见后面的课文注释与句型。

v01 · P1 interpret A as B*

/ɪn'tɜːprɪt/ *v phr.* 把A理解为B

v02 · P1 far from*

/fɑː frɒm/ *phr.* 远非；完全不是

v03 · P1 epitomise

/ɪ'pɪtəmaɪz/ *v.* 成为.....的典型；集中体现

v04 · P1 accord

/ə'kɔːd/ *n.* 一致；和谐关系

v05 · P1 bypass*

/ˈbaɪpɑːs/ *v.* 绕过程序或障碍

v06 · P2 veto

/ˈvi:təʊ/ *v.* 否决

v07 · P2 exorbitant

/ɪg'zɔːbɪtənt/ *adj.* 高得离谱的

v08 · P3 on top of*

/ɒn tɒp əv/ *phr.* 除.....之外又；再加上

v09 · P3 cull

/kʌl/ *v.* 裁减；淘汰

v10 · P3 pact

/pækt/ *n.* 协议；协定

v11 · P3 circumvent

/ˌsɜːkəm'vent/ *v.* 规避；绕过

v12 · P3 phase out

/feɪz aʊt/ *v phr.* 逐步淘汰；逐步停止

v13 · P4 exemplar

/ɪg'zemplɑː/ *n.* 典范；范例

v14 · P4 vie

/vaɪ/ *v.* 竞争；争夺

v15 · P4 come a poor second to

/kʌm ə puə 'sekənd tuː/ *phr.* 重要性远逊于.....

v16 · P5 take on

/teɪk ɒn/ *v phr.* 挑战；与.....较量

v17 · P6 pull off*

/pʊl ɒf/ *v phr.* 成功完成困难之事

v18 · P6 unbridgeable

/ʌn'brɪdʒəbəl/ *adj.* 无法弥合的

v19 · P6 contentious

/kən'tenʃəs/ *adj.* 有争议的

v20 · P7 turn around*

/tɜːn ə'raʊnd/ *v phr.* 扭转企业或局面的颓势

v21 · P7 make the most of*

/meɪk ðə məʊst əv/ *phr.* 充分利用

v22 · P7 surmount

/sə'maʊnt/ *v.* 克服；战胜

v23 · P8 foray

/fɒreɪ/ *n.* 初次尝试；涉足

v24 · P8 acclaim

/ə'kleɪm/ *n.* 高度赞誉

v25 · P8 yield*

/jiːld/ *v.* 产生；带来（结果）

v26 · P9 back down

/bæk daʊn/ *v phr.* 退让；放弃强硬立场

v27 · P10 force concessions

/fɔːs kən'seʃənz/ *v phr.* 迫使对方让步

v28 · P10 strife

/straɪf/ *n.* 冲突；纷争

Notes on the text 课文注释

1 *Mitbestimmung* : 为什么员工坐进了监事会？

[P1-P2]

这个德语词意为“共同决策”。理解文章的起点是：在大众，员工不仅可以通过工会参与谈判，也通过监事会席位参与公司治理。管理层负责经营，监事会监督管理层，并参与重要事项的决策。大众的20个监事会席位中，员工方与股东方各占10席；这不等于员工持有公司一半股份。下萨克森州的两个席位属于股东方，州政府同时关心企业经营与当地就业。因此，文章中的裁员不是管理层下达命令那么简单，而是几方力量之间的协商。

hold a strong hand 原指手里的牌好，借指“拥有有利条件”。P2先用这个形象的说法，再交代员工方的席位，说明他们为什么有谈判力量。

2 *interpret A as B* : 同一件事，可以有两种解释

[P1 · V01-V04 · K01]

第一句说，旁观者可能把协议看成共同决策制在发挥作用；第二句的 *In fact, far from ...* 立即转向相反解释。*interpret A as B* 是“把A理解为B”，其中的 *as* 不能省略。*epitomise* 则是“集中体现某种特征”：若一件事是某种模式的典型体现，就可以用这个动词。*accord* 在本句是“和谐、一致”，不必见到它就译为一份正式协议。

She interpreted his silence as agreement, but he was still thinking.

她把他的沉默理解为同意，但他其实还在考虑。

The small family hotel epitomises the town's relaxed way of life.

这家家庭小旅馆集中体现了小镇悠闲的生活方式。

3 *Both ... / the costs they entail* : 别丢掉指代

[P2]

Both 承接前面的员工代表一方和下萨克森州，两方都希望保住德国岗位；后一句转向管理层。*cut them* 中的 *them* 指这些岗位，*the costs they entail* 则是“这些岗位所带来的成本”。*entail* 比 *cause* 更强调某件事必然涉及或伴随的要求、代价。这样读，句子的对比就是“保岗位”与“减岗位、降成本”。

Working abroad may entail learning a new language.

到国外工作可能意味着还得学习一门新语言。

4 *the same number culled under a deal struck in 2024*

[P3 · V08-V10]

the same number 指同样数量的岗位；*culled* 修饰岗位，*struck in 2024* 修饰协议。可把压缩的结构展开理解为：*the same number of jobs that were cut under a deal that was struck in 2024*。*strike a deal* 是“达成协议”，不是“打击协议”。句中的 *on top of* 表示额外叠加，所以本次削减不是在重述上一次安排。

The rent is high, and we have to pay for heating on top of that.

房租很高，除此之外，我们还得支付取暖费。

Notes on the text 课文注释 (续)

5 *a nuclear option / come a poor second*

[P3-P4 · V11-V15]

a nuclear option 借核武器的极端性，形容足以打破常规、代价也可能很大的最后手段；本文指威胁绕过监事会，直接诉诸股东。*Trashing co-determination* 也不是中性措辞：*trash* 在这里带有强烈贬抑色彩。接着，*profitability came a poor second ... to scale* 把过去的优先次序点明：比起做大规模，盈利能力远居其次。*poor* 强调差距，不是在说盈利“排名第二所以还不错”。

In choosing a home, appearance comes a poor second to location.

选择住房时，外观的重要性远不及地段。

6 *take on / pull off* : 挑战与办成是两回事

[P5-P6 · V16-V19]

take on the unions 是“与工会较量”，不是“承担工会”。同一短语在 *take on a new role* 中却表示承担新职责。*pull off* 进一步强调把一件困难的事办成，常接 *a deal, a victory, a difficult task*；宾语若是代词，就说 *pull it off*。P5先写两任经理所遇到的阻力，P6才说布鲁梅似乎办成了职业生涯中最重要的事，这样的铺垫使转折更有分量。

No one expected the small team to finish on time, but they pulled it off.

没人料到这个小团队能按时完成，但他们做到了。

an unbridgeable gap 把分歧比作无法架桥跨越的鸿沟；*close the gap* 则是缩小或弥合差距，不是关上一道门。

7 *turn around / make the most of* : 争取来的时间怎么用？

[P7 · V20-V22 · K06]

turn a company around 是使公司摆脱困境；也可以说 *the company turns around*。国际货币基金组织介绍爱尔兰经济复苏时写道：“*the Irish economy began to turn around*”，这里同样是“开始好转”，不是字面的转身。P7的 *win VW time to ...* 只说明赢得了机会；接下来的 *make the most of* 才要求充分利用它。*if it is to come close* 是说“大众若要接近这一目标”，这里的 *it* 指大众，目标是前面的利润率目标。

We have only one afternoon in the city, so let's make the most of it.

我们在这座城市只有一个下午，所以要好好利用这段时间。

8 *yielded little* : 投入很多，收效很少

[P8 · V25]

yield 在这里是及物动词，意为“产生、带来”，常说 *yield results / benefits / a return*。*little* 指很少的成果，和前面的 *Big investments* 形成反差。剑桥词典的例句 “*The investigation yielded some unexpected results.*” 意为“调查得出了一些意外结果”。可见它不只用于农业产量或投资收益，也用于研究和调查的结果。

Months of testing yielded little useful information.

数月测试几乎没有带来有用的信息。

Special difficulties 难点辨析

1 *bypass* 与 *circumvent*

[P1/P3 · V05/V11]

两词都可表示绕过障碍。*bypass* 比较直观，既可以说绕开一条道路，也可说越过某人或某项程序；*circumvent* 较正式，常强调设法避开规则或限制。它们在本文指向相近的做法，但不必在所有语境中互换。剑桥词典的例句是 “*They bypassed him and went straight to his manager.*”：他们越过他，直接去找了他的经理。

The new road bypasses the village.

新公路绕过村庄。这里是实际路线，不宜硬换成规避制度的说法。

2 *phase out* / *close* / *back down*

[P3/P6/P9 · V12/V26]

phase out 强调分阶段停止；*close a plant* 强调工厂关闭；*find alternative uses* 则是改作其他用途，不能一律译成关闭。*back down* 是从原先的强硬立场退让，常接 *from a demand / a plan*。同样，方案“为关闭工厂打开道路”和当事人说“没有批准关闭工厂”也不是同一句话：前者谈协议带来的可能，后者在争论具体承诺。读到这里，要保留这层分歧。

The company will phase out paper tickets over the next two years.

公司将在未来两年逐步停止使用纸质票。

3 *may* / *seems* / *are said to* / *hardly*

[P1/P4/P6/P8]

may / *could* 表可能；*seems* / *appears* 表“从迹象看似乎如此”；*are said to* 告诉读者这是一种转述。它们所做的事情不同，并不只是同一条“确定程度尺”上的几个刻度。*hardly* 则带否定意味，P8的意思是早期尝试几乎没有获得广泛赞誉。写评论时应当让事实、推测和转述各得其所，不必在每句话前都加“可能”。

Intercultural background 跨文化背景

合作式劳资关系，并不等于没有冲突

文章中的 *trade union*（工会）和 *works council*（职工委员会）不宜混作同一机构。前者参与劳资集体谈判，后者是企业内的员工代表机构，参与有关工作条件及经营变化的沟通协商；人员和关注点可能重叠，但身份和职能不同。所谓“合作模式”，主要是把员工参与纳入制度，并非假设双方永远意见一致。这也解释了作者为何追问：一次协议究竟表明制度能够调适，还是表明管理层已找到削弱它的办法？

P8还有另一层跨文化视角：中国车企既是竞争压力的来源，又成为技术参照和合作方。读商业报道时，不妨追问作者给每个参与者安排了什么角色，而不只按国别把企业分成固定的敌友。Think about it: Can a firm learn from a competitor? Find one example in P8.

Key structures 关键句型

K01 · P1 far from : 远非 ; 非但没有

In fact, far from epitomising the long-standing German model ..., the unexpected deal ... may signal the beginning of its end.

这里不是说“距离某种模式很远”，而是说协议非但没有体现这种模式，反而可能预示其终结。**far from** 后可接名词、形容词或动词的 **-ing** 形式；本句接动作，所以用 *epitomising*。句首这一部分与主句说的是同一件事，即 *the unexpected deal*。写作时可用它先否定一种判断，再说实际情况。

Far from saving us time, the new booking system caused further delays.

新预订系统非但没有节省我们的时间，反而造成了更多延误。

K02 · P1 only when : 直到.....才.....

The carmaker's powerful unions and employees' representatives agreed to it only when the bosses threatened to bypass the system altogether.

工会和员工代表“直到管理层发出威胁才同意”，突出了促成让步的关键条件。**only when** 放在句尾，主句用正常语序；移到句首时，主句要部分倒装，把助动词或情态动词放在主语前。一般过去时没有现成的助动词，便加 *did*，原来的动词改回原形；*when* 从句本身不倒装。

Only when the figures had been checked did the team publish the report.

只有核对过数字后，团队才发布报告。

K03 · P2/P10 介词 + which

decisions of which it disapproves ; a powerful weapon with which to force concessions

先还原 *It disapproves of the decisions*，就能看出 **of** 来自 *disapprove of* 这一搭配；把介词移到 *which* 前，是较正式的写法。第二个片段中的 **with** 表示“借助”，后面接不定式，意思是“可用来迫使对方让步的手段”。两者都修饰前面的名词，但后一种没有完整的主语和谓语。

The researchers developed a scale with which to compare the samples.

研究人员设计了一套可用于比较样本的量表。

K04 · P4 are said to have insisted : 据称曾坚持要求

They are said to have insisted that every job created abroad be matched by one in Germany.

are said to have insisted 相当于“据称曾坚持要求”：*are said* 表明这是转述，*to have insisted* 表明提出要求发生在转述之前。后半句是工会要求的内容：每在海外创建一个岗位，就要在德国配套创建一个岗位。**insist** 表示“坚持要求”时，从句可用动词原形；这里又是被动，故用 *be matched*，也可说 *should be matched*。如果 *insist* 表示“坚称某事属实”，则不能一概套用这一形式。

The director is said to have insisted that every applicant be interviewed.

据称，主任曾坚持要求对每一位申请者进行面试。

Key structures 关键句型 (续)

K05 · P6 what 引导的结构：先抓主干，再补转述

The agreement appears to close what Bernstein, a broker, had said looked like an “unbridgeable gap” between management and workers.

先抓住“协议似乎弥合了分歧”这一主干，再看 *close* 后面整块内容。暂时拿开 *Bernstein ... had said*，便得到 **what looked like an unbridgeable gap**：“看起来像无法弥合的鸿沟的东西”，在这里就是劳资分歧。**what** 在里面作 *looked like* 的主语，整块结构作 *close* 的宾语。放回转述部分后，句子又交代了这个判断是谁此前提出的；*a broker* 则补充介绍伯恩斯坦的身份。

The repairs removed what the inspector had said was a serious safety risk.

这次维修消除了检查员此前所说的一处严重安全隐患。

K06 · P7 win somebody time to do：为.....争取时间

Mr Blume has thus won VW time to turn itself around.

win VW time 是“为大众争取时间”，后面的不定式说明这段时间用来做什么：*turn itself around*，扭转自身颓势。这里得到时间、需要转型的都是大众，所以 *itself* 指大众，不指布鲁梅。这一句只说明公司获得了调整的机会，并不等于转型已经成功；这也衔接了下文仍然存在的困难。

The extra funding won the laboratory time to complete the trial.

追加的资金为实验室争取了完成试验的时间。

K07 · P8 although 与 hardly：让步和否定意味

Although its electric vehicles (EVs) are improving, its earlier forays were hardly met with widespread acclaim.

although 先承认现在的电动车正在改善，主句再指出早期尝试反响不佳：前一事实没有推翻后一判断。**hardly** 在这里是“几乎没有”，带有否定意味，并不是 *may* 那样的“可能”。读到它，就应把 *met with widespread acclaim* 理解为“几乎没有获得广泛赞誉”。英语中通常不把 *although* 和 *but* 同时用来连接这两部分。

Although the new system is faster, it is hardly easy to use.

虽然新系统速度更快，却很难说它用起来方便。

K08 · P10 one 替代前文的名词

This may be the start of a new era at VW. It could be one of greater co-operation between bosses and workers—or of further industrial strife.

这里的 **one** 代替前一句的 *era*。把它换回去，就得到“一个劳资合作更多的时代，或一个劳资冲突更多的时代”。两个 **of** 短语并列，说明这个时代可能具有的特征。因此不能把眼前的 *one of* 直接理解成“.....之一”；要先回到上文找出 *one* 代替什么。*could* 则为这两种不同的前景都保留了可能性。

The coming decade could be one of steady progress—or of renewed division.

未来十年可能是稳步前进的十年，也可能是再次分裂的十年。

Comprehension 理解与判断

Choose the best answer. 选出最符合原文的一项。

1. The writer regards the agreement as a win for management mainly because
 - a. all German factories will close immediately.
 - b. managers obtained concessions by threatening to bypass the system.
 - c. VW no longer needs to negotiate with employees.
2. In P2, the 20% voting stake belongs to
 - a. VW's employees. b. the works council. c. Lower Saxony.
3. Which problem remains after the agreement?
 - a. Delayed software plans and falling sales in China.
 - b. A complete absence of technology partners.
 - c. A legal ban on making electric vehicles.
4. Cavallo's statement in P9 chiefly reminds readers that
 - a. the agreement's practical meaning and implementation remain contested.
 - b. management has already closed four factories.
 - c. the company has abandoned all cost reductions.
5. The last paragraph leaves open the possibility of
 - a. co-operation only. b. conflict only. c. either outcome.

Vocabulary 词汇运用

Complete the sentences with the expressions below. Change the form where necessary.

interpret ... as · far from · bypass · on top of · pull off · turn around · make the most of · yield

1. The team _____ a launch that everyone had thought impossible. [V17]
2. The new manager hopes to _____ the struggling business. [V20]
3. The experiment _____ some useful results last year. [V25]
4. We _____ her early arrival _____ a sign of enthusiasm. [V01]
5. There is a delivery charge _____ the purchase price. [V08]
6. Please follow the procedure; do not _____ the approval stage. [V05]
7. The task is _____ easy, but it is worth doing. [V02]
8. You have a day in London. How will you _____ it? [V21]

Key structures: exercises 句型练习

在笔记本中作答。编号与前面的讲解、书末答案一一对应。

- K01.** 用 *Far from* 改写 : The new rule did not simplify the process; it made it more complicated. [K01]
- K02.** 把 *Only when* 移到句首 : The team released the report only when all the figures had been checked. [K02]
- K03.** 填空 : a decision _____ she disapproves; a tool _____ to measure progress. [K03]
- K04.** 用 *is said to have insisted* 改写 : Reports say the director demanded that every applicant should be interviewed. [K04]
- K05.** 指出本句 *what* 结构整体的作用, 再用简单英语复述 : *The repairs removed what the inspector had said was a serious safety risk.* [K05]
- K06.** 用 *win ... time to* 翻译 : 追加资金为公司争取了改善产品的时间, 但销售仍然疲软。 [K06]
- K07.** 用 *Although* 合并 : The new software is faster. It is not easy to use. [K07]
- K08.** 还原 *one* : *The coming decade could be one of steady progress—or of renewed division.* [K08]

Summary writing 摘要写作

Write 100–120 words in English. Use the questions to organise your ideas; do not translate the article paragraph by paragraph.

1. Why did VW need change, and why was it difficult to achieve?
2. What threat helped management obtain the agreement?
3. What does the agreement offer, and what remains uncertain?

先记关键词, 再写成一段。摘要应同时交代突破与限制, 不能把“争取了时间”写成“已经解决问题”。请在笔记本或另纸上完成。

Composition 作文·选做

Write 180–220 words: *Does the agreement show that German co-determination is failing, or that it can adapt to pressure?*

说明你的判断, 用两项课文证据支持它, 再回应一种不同意见。事实写清楚, 不确定的判断留有分寸; 不要求机械地使用某几个词。

Speaking and review | 口头运用与复习

两人分别代表管理层与员工, 商议一项降本措施和一项员工保障; 自学者可用90秒说明两方为何会接受你的方案。隔天合上书, 回忆文章中心、两项证据, 并用三个重点表达各造一个与大众无关的句子; 一周后换个话题再试一次。

Reference translation 参考译文

完成理解与摘要后再核对。译文帮助确认意思，不替代对英文表达的体会。

P1 乍看之下，普通观察者可能会把9月3日大众汽车管理层与工会达成的协议，理解为德国“共同决策制”（*Mitbestimmung*）正在发挥作用。事实上，这份意外达成、涉及削减5万个岗位的协议，远非德国长期以来资方与员工和谐协商模式的典型体现，反而可能标志着这一模式开始走向终结。大众强大的工会和员工代表，只有在管理层威胁要彻底绕过这一制度后才同意该协议。

P2 员工在大众由20人组成的监事会中握有一手强牌。该监事会有权批准战略行动，其中十个席位由员工代表占据，另有两个席位属于大众所在地的下萨克森州。该州持有大众20%的投票权，而且依据1960年通过的《大众汽车法》，可以否决自己不赞成的决定。工会和下萨克森州长期都决心保住德国本土岗位；近几年，管理层却同样坚决地希望削减这些岗位，以及它们所带来的高昂成本。

P3 “未来计划2030”获批，为大众关闭德国工厂打开了道路。本次削减5万个岗位，是在2024年协议安排削减同等数量岗位之外的追加削减。最新协议之所以能够达成，只是在大众管理层似乎已经威胁要绕过监事会、直接诉诸股东之后——这是一种他们从未使用过的“核选项”。关于大众正在考虑逐步淘汰SEAT品牌的传闻，也可能进一步增加了压力。

P4 大众长期被视为共同决策制的典范，如今管理层却准备把这一制度撕开一道口子，足见其已经多么焦急。过去几十年，当这家德国企业与丰田争夺全球汽车业领导地位时，相比企业规模，盈利能力的重要性只能远远排在第二位。其他欧洲车企把生产转移到成本更低的东欧国家时，工会又限制了大众采取同样行动的能力。据说工会曾坚持，大众每在海外创造一个岗位，就必须在德国本土增加一个岗位。

P5 大众对昂贵的德国员工和工厂过度依赖，最初只是问题，随后演变成危机。自2019年以来，大众年销量已经减少约200万辆，2025年降至约900万辆；与此同时，中国车企无论在中国本土还是海外都迅速加剧了竞争。大众前任掌门人赫伯特·迪斯是从外部引进的，其中一个目的就是对抗工会并削减成本，但他并没有取得多少成效。2022年9月接任的奥利弗·布鲁梅则是内部人士，外界原本预计他的进展只会更小。

P2译文随原文表述。这里的否决权涉及特定决策事项，不应理解成对所有日常经营决定的一概否决。

Reference translation 参考译文 (续)

P6 如今，布鲁梅似乎完成了职业生涯中最重要的项成就。这份协议似乎弥合了经纪商伯恩斯坦此前所称的、管理层与员工之间“无法跨越的鸿沟”。最具争议的一部分，是涉及在2031年至2034年间关闭四家德国工厂的安排，使年产能减少50万辆；另一种可能是为这些工厂寻找其他用途，但看来希望渺茫。大众还将缩减并简化车型阵容，并进一步削减资本开支和研发预算，幅度甚至超过此前计划。

P7 因此，布鲁梅为大众争取到了扭转局面的时间。投资者似乎也认同这一点：9月4日早盘，大众股价大涨。但这段时间必须被充分利用。大众的目标是在2030年把营业利润率提高到9%，而目前还不到4%；若想接近这一目标，它仍有大量问题需要克服。

P8 虽然大众的电动车正在改善，但早期尝试很难说得到广泛赞誉。公司在内部软件研发上投入巨大，却收效甚微；如今这类技术要依赖美国初创企业Rivian和中国的小鹏汽车。大众计划打造中国车企普遍采用的那种“软件定义汽车”平台，但进度已经落后多年。这也是大众在华销量仍在下滑的一个原因。尽管电动化汽车约占中国市场的五分之三，但电动车在大众中国业务中只占很小一部分。

P9 更大的担忧或许是，大众工会是否真的愿意接受改变。大众职工委员会主席丹妮拉·卡瓦洛已经表示：“我们没有放弃任何一家工厂；与媒体报道相反，也没有批准关闭任何工厂。”2024年12月，工人罢工后，大众就曾从关闭三家德国工厂的计划上退让。

P10 即便如此，布鲁梅通过威胁绕过监事会，已经找到了一件能够迫使对方让步的强大武器。这或许意味着大众进入了一个新时代。这个时代可能带来管理层与员工之间更多的合作，也可能带来更加激烈的劳资冲突。

Further reading 延伸阅读

想再读一点，可以从下面两则材料入手：IMF 对爱尔兰经济复苏的介绍展示 *turn around* 在经济语境中的用法；欧洲央行2013年5月16日讲话谈到政策只能“争取时间”。读时留意：为改变创造条件，与改变本身完成，有什么区别？

本课英文正文与配图沿用所提供版本；扩展引文的简短来源已列于相关注释页，详目随可编辑源文件提供。

Reference answers

参考答案与解析

开放题给出可接受思路，不要求与参考答案逐字一致。

返回理解与词汇练习

Comprehension 理解题答案

1. **b.** P1、P3写管理层以绕过制度、直接诉诸股东的威胁取得让步。文章并没有说员工代表制度已取消，也没有说工厂已全部关闭。
2. **c.** P2的 *The state* 指下萨克森州。20%是该州的投票权，不是员工持股比例；员工的10席是另一项信息。
3. **a.** P8仍列出软件进度落后、在华销量下滑等困难。大众已有技术合作方，所以b项与原文相反。
4. **a.** 卡瓦洛的表述显示双方仍在争论协议意味着什么，以及具体如何执行；不能因此推出所有降本安排都被取消。
5. **c.** P10留下更多合作与更多冲突两种前景。*could* 表示可能，并非各有50%概率。

Vocabulary 词汇答案

题号	答案	提醒
1	pulled off	成功办成原本看来很难的事。
2	turn around	也可说 <i>turn the business around</i> 。
3	yielded	<i>last year</i> 提示一般过去时。
4	interpret / interpreted; as	两种时态均可；保留完整搭配。
5	on top of	运费在商品价格之外另付。
6	bypass	这里是否定祈使句，使用动词原形。
7	far from	接形容词 <i>easy</i> ，表示远非容易。
8	make the most of	充分利用已有的一天时间。

读前、读后与文化讨论

读前题不设唯一答案，可以认为员工参与增加协商成本，也可能帮助方案获得支持。读后应能回到本文：管理层得到了调整机会，但软件、销量和协议执行仍有困难。跨文化问题可引用P8中的小鹏：既处于中国车企竞争加剧的背景中，又是大众的软件技术合作方。不要据此把所有中德企业关系概括成同一种模式。

Key structures 句型练习答案

K01 *far from*

Far from simplifying the process, the new rule made it more complicated.

from 后用 *simplifying* ; 句首部分说的仍是主句的 *the new rule*。

K02 *only when* 与倒装

Only when all the figures had been checked did the team release the report.

倒装发生在主句, *when* 从句保持正常语序。*did* 后用 *release* , 不是 *released*。

K03 介词与关系结构

of which; with which.

第一处来自 *disapprove of* ; 第二处表示借助某工具, 后接不定式 *to measure*。

K04 转述与“坚持要求”

The director is said to have insisted that every applicant be interviewed.

也可以写成 *should be interviewed*。*to have insisted* 表示先前的要求; *be interviewed* 是要求内容中的被动表达, 不因 *applicant* 为单数而改成 *is interviewed*。

K05 *what* 结构

整个 *what ... risk* 部分作 *removed* 的宾语, *what* 又在内层作 *was* 的主语。可复述为: *The repairs removed a safety risk. The inspector had described it as serious.* 只写“维修消除了隐患”抓住了主干, 但复述时应再补回评价来自检查员。

K06 *win ... time to*

The extra funding won the company time to improve its products, but sales remained weak.

也可以使用现在完成时和现在时, 保持表述一致。得到时间并不意味着产品改进或销售复苏已经完成。

K07 让步

Although the new software is faster, it is not easy to use.

Although the new software is faster, it is hardly easy to use. 也成立, 但后者带更明显的评价语气。不要在主句前再加 *but*。

K08 名词替代

The coming decade could be a decade of steady progress—or a decade of renewed division.

one 代替 *decade*。在大众原文中, 它代替的则是 *era* , 不是表示“许多个……中的一个”。

Summary writing 摘要参考与修改

Reference summary | 115 words

VW's agreement with unions appears to demonstrate co-determination, but the writer argues that it may weaken the system. Management secured concessions by threatening to bypass the supervisory board and appeal directly to shareholders. High German costs, falling sales and stronger Chinese competition had made restructuring urgent. The deal provides for further job cuts, reduced capacity and lower investment, giving VW time to improve profitability. It does not, however, resolve the company's software problems or weak performance in China. The works council also disputes what has been agreed about plant closures. Management has gained bargaining power, but whether this produces lasting co-operation or renewed conflict remains uncertain, especially when the plans move from negotiation to implementation.

必须讲到：改变的压力；管理层如何取得让步；协议带来的调整机会；尚未解决的经营和执行问题。不要求按原文顺序逐段浓缩，也不要求列出所有数字。

常见偏差：*The deal has solved VW's competitiveness problems.*

这把“获得调整机会”写成“问题已解决”。可改为：*The deal has given VW time to address its competitiveness problems, but software delays and falling sales remain.* 核对自己的摘要时，也要检查是否把暂时的进展写成了已经解决的问题。

Composition and speaking 作文与口头运用

可以支持“制度在调适”：双方最终达成协议，员工仍在组织内表达意见；也可以支持“制度受到削弱”：让步来自管理层绕过它的威胁。两种立场都应回应另一面的证据，不能把“可能开始衰落”写成“共同决策已被法律废除”。

检查自己的作文时，先看论点是否清楚、证据是否准确，再看反方意见是否被真正回应，最后修改搭配与句型。不要按使用了几个 *may* 来评定论证质量。口头任务只需说清一项降本措施、一项保障及双方接受的理由；建议方案须标为自己的主张，不能写成大众已达成的新承诺。