

行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計畫成果報告

「寇斯定理」的修正和「交易成本」概念的釐清

計畫類別：☒個別型計畫 ☐整合型計畫

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計畫主持人：熊秉元

共同主持人：

本成果報告包括以下應繳交之附件：

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執行單位：台大經濟系

中 華 民 國 89 年 08 月 18 日

行政院國家科學委員會

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一、基本資料

簽 名：_____

身份證號碼	B 1 0 0 6 1 8 6 6 6	填表日期：2000/01/18
中文姓名	熊 秉 元	英文姓名
國 籍	中 國 民 國	性 別
聯絡 / 住宅地址	100 台北市徐州路 21 號 台大經濟系	
聯絡電話	(公). 02-23519641-527 (宅). 02-23623625	
傳真號碼	02-23514625	E-MAIL hsiung@ms.cc.ntu.edu.tw

二、主要學歷

請填學士級以上之學歷或其他最高學歷均可，若仍在學者，請在學位欄填「肄業」。

畢 / 肄業學校	國別	主修學門系所	學位	起訖年月
布朗大學	美	經濟學	博士	1982/09 至 1987/06

三、現職及與專長相關之經歷

指與研究相關之專任職務，請依任職之時間先後順序由最近者往前追溯。

服務機關	服務部門 / 系所	職稱	起訖年月
現職：國立台灣大學	經濟學系	教授	1993/08
經歷：國立台灣大學	經濟學系	客座副教授	1987/08 至 1989/07
國立台灣大學	經濟學系	副教授	1989/08 至 1993/07

四、專長

請自行填寫與研究方向有關之學門及次領域名稱。

1. 個體經濟學	2. 公共經濟學	3. 財政學	4.
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一、中文摘要

在經濟學裡,寇斯定理和交易成本都是重要的概念。本文提出修正版的寇斯定理,以期能更精確的反映寇斯的原意以及文獻裡對寇斯定理的闡釋。關於交易成本,本文提出另一種角度的闡釋,並且得到以下的結果:首先,交易成本降低到極致的情形,可以明確界定;其次,交易成本是整個價值決定過程的驅動力。

關鍵詞：交易成本, 寇斯, 寇斯定理, 資訊。

JEL 分類:B41, L14。

Abstract

Both the Coase Theorem and the concept of transaction costs are important in economics. In this paper, a modified Coase Theorem is proposed so that it not only better captures Coase's original intentions but also reflects more accurately the common interpretation of the Theorem in the literature. Concerning the concept of transaction costs, a different perspective is suggested to illustrate the following results: First, the case where transaction costs are reduced to the limit is specifically identified. Secondly, transaction costs are valuable in the sense that transaction costs constitute the driving force behind the whole valuation process.

Keywords: Transaction Costs, Coase, Coase Theorem, Information.

二、緣由與目的

Coase (1960)是一篇非常重要的論文;一方面在法律經濟學上有里程碑的地位,一方面對產業組織、新制度經濟學等都有重大的影響。一般相信,這篇論文是經濟裡被引用次數最多的論文。在這篇論文裡,Coase 提出有名的「寇斯定理」:在沒有交易成本的世界裡,無論財產權如何界定,資源都會流向價值最高的使用途徑。寇斯定理引發後續極多的討論,贊成和反對的陣營裡都不乏諾貝爾獎得主(前者如 Stigler, Friedman; 後者如 Buchanan)。可是,我在 Hsiung (1999)裡指出,寇斯定理在邏輯上有很基本的瑕疵;一旦把「零交易成本」的假設推展到極致,寇斯定理並不成立。

這篇論文投稿到 European Journal of Law and Economics 時,評審之一用了許多份量很重的言詞(參考附件);譬如:

- (1) This, of course, throws into tatters most of what economists know about the world.
- (2) With that conclusion, we may as well close the book on economics.
- (3) The author is on to something important.

此外,這位評審特別具體指出兩點:

the author makes us realize

- (1) that we implicitly use the term [of zero transaction costs] in a more limited sense than its literal meaning suggests and
- (2) that the literature has not defined the term satisfactorily.

因此,這篇文章被接受發表之後,我認為值得對這兩個問題作進一步的探討。而且,該文刊出之後,相信會再度引發經濟學者對「寇斯定理」和「交易成本」的重視。因此,本研究將是站在學術領域的尖端上,往前推進。

重要性：

在經濟學裡，「寇斯定理」的重要性無庸置疑。不過，Hsiung (1999) 指出寇斯定理的缺失，這是「破」；在本研究裡，是希望修正寇斯定理，這是「立」。如果能對寇斯定理提出較合理的闡釋或修正，將是對經濟思想史、經濟理論、以及法律經濟學的貢獻。此外，在經濟學裡，「交易成本」(transaction costs)這個名詞已被廣泛的接納和運用。可是，這個名詞的實質內涵如何，卻一直沒有在經濟學家之間取得共識。

舉例而言，Williamson (1975, 1985)是組織理論裡的重要著作，可是卻沒有明確的為「交易成本」作出精確的定義。North (1990)是「新經濟史」的鉅著，作者在書中也強調，交易成本的高低是影響社會興頹的重要因素；可是，North 大體上只是遵循 Coase (1960, 1988)概略性的定義(把「交易成本」界定為搜尋、議價和踐約的成本)。此外，Zerbe (1980)認為，交易成本是個直覺式(a heuristic concept)的概念，不容易明確界定。

三、結果與討論

在 Coase (1937)裡，寇斯提出的問題是：為什麼會有廠商？對於生產者(或企業家)而言，為什麼不完全利用市場機能來組合和運用資源？他找到的答案是：利用市場機能也有成本；因此，如果組成廠商的成本較低，就值得以廠商來取代市場機能。在這篇重要的文章裡，寇斯已經注意到「運用市場機能的成本」---為達成交易所必須承擔(付出)的成本。如果我們能遵循寇斯的智識之旅，那麼，在發表 Coase (1937)之後，他想必是問自己這一連串的問題：因為運用市場機能有成本，所以企業家的行為會受到交易成本的影響；那麼，市場機能的成本又會如何影響到其他的經濟活動？而且，更進一步設想，當這種成本很低(或為零)時，資源的運用會是如何？後來，當寇斯研究如何分配廣播電台的發射頻率時，這一連串的問題想必是自然而然的出現在他的腦海裡。然後，答案就是有名的「寇斯定理」。當然，本文指出，修訂版的「寇斯定理」不但忠於寇斯的原意，而且是邏輯上比較嚴謹的敘述。

雖然寇斯認為自己對經濟學的貢獻，是在於對「生產的制度性環境」(the institutional structure of production)所作的探討；可是，「交易成本」的概念使經濟學者脫離了新古典理論沒有交易成本、不真實的世界，而能較平實深入的探討真實世界裡的經濟活動。把「交易成本」視為經濟學裡最重要的概念之一，並不為過。因此，Coase 的貢獻當然不限於他自己所認定的，只是在於強調「生產的制度性環境」很重要。「交易成本」這個概念，縮短了經濟學家和真實社會(經濟)現象之間的距離。

四、計畫成果自評

在這篇論文裡，我並沒有對於「交易成本」這個概念提出明確的「定義」，也沒有指出在論述時操作性的意義為何。可是，我以較平實的方式，呈現出有關「交易成本」較受忽視的一些面向。而且，最重要的一點，是指出「交易成本」在價值形成過程中的關鍵地位。此外，我進一步的說明，我所採取的這種論述方式的意義。希望這些觀點不但有助於我們了解「交易成本」這個概念，也有助於我們了解經濟學論述的本質！

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