Trade Costs and Markups*

Alexander McQuoid[†] Loris Rubini[‡]

August 15, 2014

Abstract

We explore the effects of trade liberalization on firm markups by building a new model of international trade with heterogeneous markups. The model is consistent with three stylized facts: (1) exporters charge larger markups than non-exporters, (2) entering into the export market is associated with markup increases, and (3) domestic and foreign sales are negatively correlated. This third observation suggests decreasing returns to scale in firm production, which implies markups cannot be split among domestic and foreign. We calibrate the model to match key moments for Chilean firms, and simulate counterfactual reductions in trade costs. Our results suggest that markup responses are quite heterogeneous overall. Along the intensive margin, lower trade costs increase markups on average and for most firms. Along the extensive margin, firm markups unambiguously decline. Two countervailing mechanisms are operating here. On one hand, the reduction in trade costs is not fully passed through to prices, increasing markups. On the other, reduced trade costs drive firms to expand output, which increases marginal costs under decreasing returns to scale technologies, reducing markups. While the first effect is more prevalent along the intensive margin, the second one prevails in the extensive margin.

JEL classification: F12; F17

Keywords: Exporting and decreasing returns to scale. Correlation between exports and domestic sales. Exporting and markups.

---

*We would like to thank Bernardo Blum and Amit Khandelwal for helpful discussions. We benefitted from talks at the Central Bank of Chile, the Kansas Fed, NASME 2014, SED 2014 and WEAI 2014. Loris Rubini gratefully acknowledges financial support from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (ECO2011-27014).

[†]Department of Economics, Florida International University and The United States Naval Academy. Email: mcquoid@usna.edu

[‡]Department of Economics, Universidad Catolica de Chile and Universidad Carlos III. Email: lrubini@uc.cl.

1 Introduction

The relationship between trade costs and firm markups is poorly understood. Only a handful of papers have attempted to address this relationship directly, and these tend to be theoretical exercises not driven by empirical regularities. This is surprising since markups contain valuable information about how the competitive environment changes with declining trade costs. Recent innovations in measuring markups in standard firm level datasets, however, call for a reassessment of the mechanisms behind firm markup adjustment.

In this paper, we isolate firm characteristics that tend to drive pro- or anti-competitive responses to declining trade costs, and show there is substantial heterogeneity in markup adjustments. To do so, we build a new model of international trade with endogenous, heterogeneous markups. The model is able to capture three stylized facts that are key for understanding the markup setting behavior. We then calibrate the model, and study the reaction of markups by simulating a drop in trade costs.

The stylized facts are the following. First, markups are higher for exporters than non-exporters. Second, markups increase when firms enter the export market. These two facts were first documented by De Loecker and Warzynski (2012) for Slovenia, and we confirm them using Chilean data. Third, firm sales domestically and abroad are negatively correlated. This last fact is important because we interpret it as evidence of decreasing returns to scale in production, which in turn implies that domestic and foreign markups cannot be separated.

Our model is based on Melitz and Ottaviano (2008), who develop a setting with linear demand functions, monopolistic competition, and iceberg trade costs. Additionally, we introduce decreasing returns to scale in production and three shocks: to productivity, to domestic demand, and to foreign demand. These shocks, in conjunction with decreasing returns, imply that the decision to export is directly related to the decision to sell domestically. Shocks originating in the foreign market affect decisions in the domestic market and vice versa. Under a constant marginal cost assumption, market-specific shocks only affect local behavior and markets can be analyzed in isolation.

To understand how decreasing returns link foreign and domestic markets, consider the effects of a positive shock to domestic demand which increases domestic sales. With decreasing returns to scale, the additional output leads to increasing marginal costs, which causes the firm to increase prices in the foreign market where demand was unchanged. The result is a decline in foreign sales, and an observed negative correlation between foreign and domestic sales. In a model with constant marginal costs, a domestic demand shock has no effect on the foreign market, and would fail to generate a correlation between domestic and foreign sales.

Notice that we do not force the model to deliver a negative correlation, since there are also shocks to productivity. A positive shock to productivity lowers costs, and therefore prices in both foreign and domestic markets. As a result, both domestic and foreign sales increase, generating a positive correlation. The sign of the correlation in equilibrium ultimately depends upon the quantitative importance of each shock.

Our main results are that the reaction of markups is heterogeneous, following specific patterns. Along the intensive margin, most markups increase. That is, firms that export under both trade regimes tend to increase their markups. Around 30% of these firms reduce their markups. Conversely, along the extensive margin, all markups fall. When a decline in trade costs *causes* firms to start exporting, these firms reduce their markups, but when a decline in trade costs *causes* firms to increase exports, markups tend to increase.

To understand these changes, consider first the intensive margin. Since trade costs are iceberg costs, reducing them amounts to reducing marginal costs. Some of this reduction, but not all, is passed on to prices, resulting in an increase in markups.[1] At the same time, output expands, leading to an increase in marginal costs given decreasing returns to scale in production. Again, some but not all of this increase is passed on to prices, driving firms to reduce markups. The ultimate effect for a firm depends upon the relative strength of each of these forces. We show this is driven largely by the relative elasticity of domestic and foreign demands.

Next, consider the extensive margin. For firms that don't export in the high trade cost regime, a reduction in trade costs does not imply a reduction in marginal costs. As a result, there is no decline in prices, and hence no tendency to increase markups. On the other hand, the scale effect is still present. A large expansion in output due to exporting implies a large increase in marginal costs, and consequently a reduction in markups since, once again, not all of the increase in costs is passed on to prices. There is an additional increase in revenues that comes from exports. But the fact that these firms were not exporting before means that foreign demand is relatively elastic, and therefore markups relatively small, generating a reduction in the total markup.

We rely on counterfactuals to identify the effects of trade costs on markups because we cannot identify trade costs in the data. To the best of our knowledge, the only paper that attempts to identify these costs and measure their effects on markups is De Loecker et al. (2012), who use a unique dataset containing information on quantities and prices. Their focus is on importers during a multidimensional trade liberalization episode in India. They find, as we do in the case of exporters, that the response of markups to declining trade costs is heterogeneous.

To perform the counterfactual policy experiments considered, we start by calibrating the model. The model is calibrated to moments in a dataset of Chilean manufacturing firms. We then simulate a drop in trade costs and document the reaction of markups.

[1] Only in the extreme case of constant elasticity of demand and monopolistic competition, as with Dixit-Stiglitz preferences, would marginal cost savings be completely passed on to prices.

First, we leverage on the theoretical framework to identify and extract the realization of each of the three shocks from the data. The model provides a nonlinear mapping from domestic sales, foreign sales, and markups to the unobservable shocks to productivity and demand (domestic and foreign). We directly observe information on domestic sales and exports in the data, and we estimate firm markups using available input information following De Loecker and Warzynski (2012). After recovering the shock realizations, we estimate the distribution of domestic demand and productivity shocks via maximum likelihood.

Calibrating the foreign demand shock process is more complicated since we observe a biased sample of foreign demand realizations. Only firms that have sufficiently high foreign demand shocks relative to their domestic and productivity shocks are observed exporting. We calibrate the parameters by matching total export volume and the share of firms that export in the data.

Lastly, to match the remaining parameters (which relate to time-series components of the model), we use a simulated method of moments approach, and target firm sales autocorrelations for different types of firms.

The simulated model can account for the central stylized facts previously discussed. This is noteworthy because these were not targeted in the calibration. In the data for Chilean manufacturers, exporters charge a markup that is 26 percent larger than non-exporters and entering the export market is associated with a 2.5 percent increase in the markup. In the calibrated model, the markup premium for exporters is 37 percent, and entering the export market under constant trade costs is associated with an average increase in markups of 1 percent.

The correlation between domestic and foreign sales in the data is -0.19. In the model, this correlation is -0.15. Notice that the model is not forced to deliver a negative correlation. The introduction of decreasing returns to scale allows for the possibility of a negative correlation, which would be absent in a constant marginal cost environment. However, productivity shocks generate a positive correlation. The finding of an aggregate negative correlation confirms the importance of introducing decreasing returns to scale in production.

We investigate this correlation further by analyzing the correlation between exports and domestic sales for different types of firms. We group firms according to the frequency with which they export. We find in both the data and the model that the correlation between domestic and foreign sales increases with export frequency. For example, the correlation for firms that export in every period in the data is +0.19, and for those firms that only export in around half of the periods, -0.37. The respective numbers in the model are +0.04 and -0.18.

For all of our groupings, we produce correlations of the same sign as the data, which switches with exporting frequency. The reason why the correlations increase with export frequency has to do with firm size: large firms tend to be frequent exporters, and tend to have flatter marginal cost curves, since our calibrated marginal cost function is strictly concave. Thus, large firms' marginal costs are closer to constant, and this amplifies the importance of productivity shocks, which account for the positive correlation.

Another observation from comparing the model and data for the different firm groupings is that the model delivers smaller absolute values than the data. One explanation for this result concerns the number of partner countries. Since we do not observe this number, our model features only two countries, but in the data, frequent exporters tend to sell to more countries. If each foreign demand is associated with a different, independent demand shock, total foreign demand is much less volatile for frequent exporters. Therefore, for these firms, the effect of the productivity shock becomes more important, which accounts for the positive correlation. The opposite happens to infrequent exporters, with a smaller number of partners, and more volatile foreign demand shocks.[2]

An attractive feature of the equilibrium in our model is that some large firms are unproductive. This is absent in traditional trade models, since productivity usually determines firm size. Futhermore, the share of output exported varies greatly within firms, consistent with the data, but unlike traditional models that feature homogeneous, isoelastic demands across firms.

Our results suggest that the distribution of markup responses is heterogeneous and driven by firm-specific characteristics related to demand elasticity and production scale. Previous literature has considered the response of markups to trade liberalization, but these approaches have focused on the aggregate effect rather than explaining observed heterogeneity. Arkolakis et al. (2012) show that for a particular class of models, trade costs do not affect the distribution of markups. Two relevant assumptions are a particular shape for the distribution of firm productivities (Pareto) and constant returns to scale in production, neither of which are present in our model.

Edmond et al. (2013) study the behavior of markups in a setting where trade is driven by comparative advantage.[3] They find that the effect of trade costs on markups depends on how close productivities to produce the same goods are to each other, both within and across countries. This follows because this distance determines market shares, and consequently markups. For a common good, when productivity between countries is very different or when producers within a country have very different productivities, markups increase when trade costs decline. Our work complements Edmond et al. (2013) by highlighting the alternative role of love for variety driving trade as in Melitz (2003).

The challenge of dropping the convenient assumption of constant marginal cost is to provide an alternative framework that captures essential characteristics of the data while remaining useful to investigate the complex interactions between interdependent markets.

We are not the first to notice the need for decreasing marginal returns. Blum et al. (2013)

[2]While the minimum number of partners is one as in the model, the model is calibrated to averages, thus producing average correlations.

[3]Their model is a version of Atkeson and Burstein (2008), which is itself an extension of Eaton and Kortum (2002).

account for the negative correlation between domestic and export sales growth by developing a framework with physical capacity constraints, which is isomorphic to decreasing returns to scale. Ahn and McQuoid (2013) document similar substitution patterns in both Indonesia and Chile, and find that both financial and physical constraints play an important role.

Soderbery (2011) uncovers a similar pattern using firm-level data from Thailand and uses a self-reported measure of firm capacity utilization to study the importance of physical capacity constraints in rationalizing the observed behavior. By using a similar modeling approach of linear demand combined with random and idiosyncratic capacity constraints, he derives conditions under which domestic welfare may decline with the introduction of trade. While his focus is on the qualitative implications of the model, we are interested in using the data to estimate key parameters of the model, and our results suggest that substitution patterns are more systematic that would be expected based on random capacity constraint draws.

There is also evidence of decreasing returns to scale from richer economies. Vannoorenberghe (2012) explores output volatility for French firms to conclude that the assumption of constant marginal cost may be unwarranted, while Nguyen and Schaur (2011) use Danish firm data to consider the impact of increasing marginal cost on firm output volatility. Berman et al. (2011) conjecture that capacity constraints might make foreign and domestic market sales substitutes whereas unconstrained firms might see foreign and domestic sales as complements.

The assumption of decreasing returns to scale has been used in theoretical approaches that have considered the dynamics of new exporters (see Ruhl and Willis (2008), Kohn et al. (2012), and Rho and Rodrigue (2012) for example) or in patterns of foreign acquisitions (see Spearot (2012)).

Other studies have departed from the assumption of constant returns to scale by exploring the implications of increasing returns to scale via innovation. Atkeson and Burstein (2010) introduce a costly productivity choice into the Melitz (2003) framework, which effectively introduces technologies with increasing returns to scale. Rubini (2014) shows that this assumption is of particular importance when studying the effects of large macroeconomic changes in trade policy, such as the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Canada. Our study concentrates on the Chilean economy between 1995 and 2005, a period of relative stability in terms of aggregate imports and exports, suggesting the absence of large changes that require the modeling of innovation.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In the next section, motivating empirical evidence is presented. Section 3 describes the model while Section 4 discusses estimation techniques. The ability of the model to match stylized facts is discussed in Section 5. Section 6 presents the main findings. Section 7 analyzes the sensitivity of the results, and Section 8 concludes.

2 Data

We focus on a panel of Chilean manufacturing firms from 1995 through 2006. This dataset includes all manufacturing firms with 10 or more employees. Standard measures of firm activity are recorded, including information on inputs, outputs, ownership, assets, exporting, and a variety of other measures that provide a complete portrait of the firm. The data has been widely used in empirical studies of firm behavior, most notably in Liu (1993) and Pavcnik (2002). A thorough description of the data can be found in Blum et al. (2013).[4]

Focusing on the sample from 1995-2006, there are 61,548 total observations and 10,163 unique firms. Of these observations, 19,433 belong to firms classified as exporters, meaning that these firms export at some point in the sample. 32% of the sample observations belong to a firm that will export at least once during the sample, or roughly 26% of all firms (2,701 unique firms).

There is a significant amount of switching in to and out of the export market during the sample. In a given year, 2.5% of firms are starting exporting (meaning they did not export in the previous year, but are exporting in the current year) while another 2.5% of firms have ceased exporting. Furthermore, in a given year, 17% of firms are continuing exporting, meaning that they exported in both the previous year and the current year, while 68% of firms are continuing non-exporters (meaning these firms did not export in the last year or in the current year).[5]

The amount of churning at the extensive margin is quite notable. 85% of firms are staying in the market (or markets) that they operated in the previous period, but 15% of firms are operating in a new market (or markets). To further quantify the amount of switching in the market, we classify every observation of every firm in every year. Of the approximately 10,000 unique firms, 85% experience no switching over the span of the sample. Of these firms, 14% are continuous exporters and 86% are continuous non-exporters. Of the rest of the firms, 7% switch in to or out of the export market exactly once, and the other 7% experience at least two switches in to or out of the export market.[6] Since exporters tend to be in the sample for longer than non-exporters, in terms of overall observations, 12% of all observations belong to firms that switch more than once, while 20% of all observations belong to a firm experiencing at least one switch in export market participation. Over 5% of all observations belong to firms experiencing 3 or more switches.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that exporting is itself a rare phenomena. If 12% of

[4] All measures of sales, materials, and capital used in the analysis were deflated using an industry-level price index found in Almeida and Fernandes (2013).

[5] 10% are firms that are new to the sample, or are returning to the sample having been absent in the previous year.

[6] Since the sample is censored in that firms with less than 10 employees are not observed, and no firms prior to 1995 are observed, it is possible to first appear in the sample as an exporter. We do not record this as a switch into the export market since we don't know for certain the firm didn't export in the previous year. As constructed, some firms with exactly one switch are firms exiting the export market, although these firms have actually experienced at least two switches since they had to start in the export market at some point. The amount of switching is therefore based only on observed behavior, and as such, understates the actual amount of market switching.

all observations belong to firms that switch more than once, among the class of all exporters, this accounts for 38% of all observations associated with exporters, while 17% of all exporter observations belong to firms that experience 3 or more changes in their exporting behavior.

We start by documenting significant differences between exporters and non-exporters, which is well attested in the heterogeneous firm literature already. There are statistically and economically significant exporter premia in the data. Summary statistics are reported in Table 1.

Exporter Type	Total Sales	Domestic Sales	Employees	Value-added	Investment	Capital	Productivity
Exporter	10643193	6097976	125.2	6246539	464895	6560982	0.5998
	(325034)***	(248487)***	(1.27)***	(227183)***	(35489)***	(303989)***	(0.011)***
Non-Exporter	957116.7	957117	34.86	585302	38096	426037	5.629171
	(182573)	(139673)	(0.71)	(127690)	(19944)	(170828)	(0.006)
N	61,548	61,548	61,548	61,548	56,479	61,548	57,773

Notes: Coefficients from regression of column variable on exporter indicator function. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. (***) indicates coefficient on exporter significant at 0.1 percent.

Table 1: Summary Statistics (by Exporter Status)

To identify and quantify patterns of substitution between domestic and foreign sales at the firm level, we calculate correlations between export and domestic sales for each firm. Furthermore, we investigate whether substitution patterns differ significantly across types of firms.

When we consider the correlation between domestic and foreign sales across all firms, we find a raw correlation of 0.16 overall. This might be taken as evidence that exports and domestic sales are complements, but in fact the relationship captures differences between types of firms. By looking across firms, the relationship identified in the data is not a within-firm experience, but rather captures the fact that larger firms tend to sell more domestically and tend to sell more abroad, which generates the observed positive relationship.

If we focus instead on within-firm behavior, we find a very different story. The aggregate within-firm correlation is -0.18, which is of similar magnitude but the opposite sign when compared to the correlation across all firms. The within-firm correlation is indicative of the fundamental tradeoff firms face when choosing between supplying the domestic market and supplying the foreign market. This result is consistent with previous literature that has identified patterns of substitution between domestic and foreign sales.

The correlation observed in the data might be driven by latent variables and not reflect a direct relationship between domestic and export sales. As will become explicit in our theoretical exposition, one needs to be careful to distinguish between productivity shocks and demand shocks when observing sales across borders for an individual firm since a productivity shock will tend to create a positive correlation between domestic and export sales while individual market demand shocks will generate patterns of substitution. To better get at the direct relationship between domestic and foreign sales, consider the partial correlation after controlling for firm fixed effects as well as year and industry effects found in column (3) of Table 2. After partialling out these effects, the overall correlation is -0.19. After calibrating and simulating the model, evaluation of the model will be based on matching this standard, which cannot be matched with constant returns technology assumptions.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	N
Exporters	0.16	-0.18	-0.19	19,443
Firm Fixed Effects	No	Yes	Yes	
Sector Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes	
Year Dummies	No	No	Yes	

Table 2: (Partial) Correlation of domestic and foreign sales

Lastly, to motivate our demand side assumptions, we estimate and analyze firm level markups, following the method suggested by De Loecker and Warzynski (2012).[7] The major innovations of this estimation approach are the ability to account for simultaneity in input decisions and the use of a flexible production structure. The estimation procedure is consistent with our production and demand modeling assumptions.

There is overwhelming evidence in the data of significant heterogeneity of markups at the level of the firm, and these markups change significantly over time as well. Across all observations, the mean markup is larger than the median markup, and this observation holds in each individual year and within each sector (not reported). The average markup for the entire sample is 2.36 while the median markup is 1.79. The skewness is the data is driven by two forces. On the lower bound, firms with markups much below 1 are likely to exit the market since they are not sufficiently covering costs. For the top 5% of firms, markups exceed 5, suggesting a few firms are able to price well above costs.

When looking at the relationship between export status and markups, we find a similar result to De Loecker and Warzynski (2012) in that exporters tend to have larger markups than non-exporters, and this is robust to the inclusion of observable characteristics such as input usage,

[7]De Loecker and Warzynski (2012) argue that this methodology may underestimate markups, because of the use the industry price deflators to correct for changes in individual prices.

Year	Mean	Median	p5	p25	p75	p95	N
1996	2.298	1.936	0.724	1.338	2.827	5.065	4,369
1997	2.279	1.901	0.699	1.304	2.804	4.958	4,212
1998	2.420	1.813	0.691	1.243	2.716	5.137	4,237
1999	2.180	1.754	0.633	1.184	2.648	4.948	4,039
2000	3.007	1.781	0.635	1.195	2.770	6.197	3,877
2001	2.134	1.665	0.669	1.155	2.511	4.884	3,429
2002	2.223	1.739	0.647	1.153	2.625	5.205	3,847
2003	2.435	1.700	0.541	1.115	2.602	5.189	4,026
2004	2.254	1.786	0.671	1.199	2.676	5.169	3,968
2005	2.240	1.770	0.651	1.184	2.660	5.236	3,953
2006	2.432	1.786	0.658	1.179	2.729	5.694	4,009
Aggregate	2.356	1.787	0.655	1.207	2.697	5.219	43,966

Table 3: Distribution of Markups across years

productivity, industry and year controls. Exporters charge 26% higher markups than non-exporters when looking across firms, which drops to 2.5% when looking at within firm adjustments.

ln(markup)	1	2
Export Status	0.259	
	(34.72)***	
Starter		0.025
		(1.92)+
Stopper		-0.009
		(-0.70)
Continuer		0.032
		(2.75)**
Sector FE	yes	yes
Year Dummies	yes	yes
Firm FE	no	yes
Observations	43,975	43,975

Notes: The dependent variable is firm-level markup. Export Status is a 1 when a firm is exporting in that period, and 0 otherwise. The Starter indicator is a 1 when a firm has positive exports in a given year and no export sales in the previous year, and 0 otherwise. The Stopper indicator is a 1 when a firm has no export sales in a given year but had positive exports in the previous year, and 0 otherwise. The Continuer indicator variable is a 1 when a firm has positive exports this period and had positive exports in the previous period, and 0 otherwise. A constant term, capital and labor usage, and firm productivity are included in each regression and omitted in the table. T-statistics are provided in parentheses based on robust standard errors. Significance: + 10 percent; * 5 percent; ** 1 percent, *** 0.1 percent.

Table 4: Markups and Exporting Behavior

While this evidence is suggestive and worthy of further investigation, given that exporting behavior is not randomly assigned, there should be caution in interpreting these results causally. We will return to these issues when we conduct counterfactual experiments on the simulated data. We now turn to building the theoretical model with these facts and relationships in mind.

3 Model

We use the Melitz and Ottaviano (2008) framework as the building block for our analysis. This has the advantage of generating heterogeneous, endogenous markups in equilibrium while keeping the environment extremely tractable. It does so by assuming preferences that generate linear demands. We extend the model by introducing decreasing returns to scale technologies and three distinct firm shocks (shock to productivity, domestic demand, and export demand). Notice that with linear demands we can generate entry and exit into the export market without fixed (or sunk) costs, so we assume there are none.

Time runs $t = 0, 1, \ldots$. There are two symmetric countries, populated by a continuum of consumers of mass 1. Country H is the Home country and country F is the foreign country.

Consumers. Consumers have within period preferences given by

$$\begin{aligned} U =& q_0 + \int_{\Omega_H} \exp(x(\omega))q(\omega)d\omega + \int_{\Omega_F} \exp(y(\omega))q(\omega)d(\omega) - \\ & 1/4\gamma\left(\int_{\Omega_H} q(\omega)^2 d\omega + \int_{\Omega_F} q(\omega)^2 d\omega\right) - 1/2\eta\left(\int_{\Omega_H} q(\omega)d\omega + \int_{\Omega_F} q(\omega)d\omega\right)^2 \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where Ω_i is the set of goods produced in i, $i = H, F$, $q(\omega)$ is the quantity consumed of good ω, $x(\omega)$ is the domestic demand shock for good ω, and $y(\omega)$ is the foreign demand shock for good ω. q_0 is a non-traded, numeraire good produced by a standin representative firm with linear technology. $\gamma > 0$ and $\eta > 0$ are preference parameters that govern the elasticity of demand and the elasticity of substitution between varieties, respectively. Intuitively, a larger γ reduces the substitutability between tradable goods.[8] Conversely, a larger η implies a stronger preference for q_0.

The shocks $x(\omega), y(\omega)$ follow AR(1) processes, given by

$$x_{t+1}(\omega) = (1-\rho_x)\bar{x} + \rho_x x_t(\omega) + \varepsilon_{xt}(\omega)$$
$$y_{t+1}(\omega) = (1-\rho_y)\bar{y} + \rho_y y_t(\omega) + \varepsilon_{yt}(\omega)$$

where $\varepsilon_{xt}(\omega) \sim N(0, \sigma_x^2), \varepsilon_{xt}(\omega) \sim N(0, \sigma_y^2), 0 < \rho_x < 1, 0 < \rho_y < 1$.

Each consumer has one unit of labor each period which she supplies inelastically. The budget

[8] If $\gamma = 0$ there is perfect substitution.

constraint is as follows, given prices $p(\omega)$, p_0, a wage w and profits π:

$$\int_{\Omega_H} p(\omega)q(\omega)d\omega + \int_{\Omega_F} p(\omega)q(\omega)d\omega + p_0 q_0 = w + \pi \tag{2}$$

Maximizing the utility function with respect to the budget constraint delivers a demand function that firms take as given when maximizing profits. The inverse demand functions are:

$$p_H(\omega, q_H) = \exp(x(\omega)) - \eta Q - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_H \tag{3}$$

$$p_F(\omega, q_F) = \exp(y(\omega)) - \eta Q - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_F \tag{4}$$

$p_i, i = H, F$ is the price of the good depending on the market where it is sold, and $Q = \int_{\Omega_H} q_(\omega)d\omega + \int_{\Omega_F} q(\omega)d\omega$. Notice that the demand for a particular good may be negative, which implies the existence of a choke price above which no quantity will be sold in equilibrium.

Firms. There is one representative firm in the non-tradable sector with technology $q_0(n) = n$. This sector is perfectly competitive, which implies that in equilibrium, $p_0 = w = 1$.

In the tradable sector, there is one firm per good, acting as a monopolist. The production function is $q(n; \omega) = \exp(-z(\omega))n^{1/\alpha}$. In addition, if q_F units are exported, there is a transport cost equal to $(\tau - 1)q_F$. This yields the following cost function to produce q_H units for the domestic market and q_F units to export:

$$c(q_H + q_F; \omega) = \exp(z(\omega))(q_H + \tau q_F)^\alpha$$

$\alpha > 1$ is the returns to scale parameter, and $\exp(z(\omega))$ is the inverse of productivity, which follows the following AR(1) process:

$$z_{t+1}(\omega) = (1 - \rho_z)\bar{z} + \rho_z z_t(\omega) + \varepsilon_{zt}(\omega)$$

where $\varepsilon_{zt}(\omega) \sim N(0, \sigma_z^2), 0 < \rho_z < 1$. Each period, firms observe their productivity and the demand shocks and choose prices and quantities to maximize profits. That is, firm ω solves

$$\max_{p_H, q_H, p_F, q_F} p_H q_H + p_F q_F - \exp(z(\omega))(q_H + \tau q_F)^\alpha \tag{5}$$

$s.t.$ equations (3) and (4).

Market Clearing. In equilibrium, all firms producing tradable goods with positive demands ($x > \eta Q$ or $y > \eta Q$) will demand labor units. The representative firm producing non-tradable goods also demands labor. The quasilinear nature of preferences implies that all labor in excess of that demanded by the tradable sector is absorbed by the non-tradable sector. Thus, $\int_{\Omega_H} n(\omega)d\omega + n_0 = 1$, where $n(\omega)$ solves problem (5) and n_0 is the labor demand of the non tradable sector.

3.1 Equilibrium

While the setup is dynamic, the decisions of the firm are static, since there is no endogenous state variable. An equilibrium is a list of quantities $q(\omega)$ and q_0, labor inputs $n(\omega)$ and n_0 and prices $p(\omega)$ such that consumers maximize (1) subject to equation (2), firms solve (5), and markets clear in every period.

In what follows, it is convenient to drop the name of the good ω and refer to firms according to their type. Each firm is a triplet (x, y, z). In equilibrium, the solution to problem (5) allows for several corners. In particular, when $\exp(x) < \eta Q$, the good will not be sold domestically, and when $\exp(y) < \eta Q$, it will not be exported. Still, when neither of these conditions are met, it will be sometimes optimal to sell in only one market. The next proposition shows all the possible cases.

Proposition 1. *A firm x, y, z will only sell domestically when $\exp(x) > \eta Q$ and $x > \bar{x}(y, z)$. Similarly, it will only export when $\exp(y) > \eta Q$ and $y > \bar{y}(x, z)$. It will sell in both markets when $\exp(x) > \eta Q, \exp(y) > \eta Q, x \geq \bar{y}(x, z)$ and $y \geq \bar{y}(x, z)$, where*

$$\bar{x}(y, z) = \log\left(\gamma\left(\frac{\exp(y) - \eta Q}{\tau\alpha\exp(z)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\alpha-1}} + \frac{\exp(y) - \eta Q}{\tau} + \eta Q\right) \tag{6}$$

$$\bar{y}(x, z) = \log\left(\frac{\gamma}{\tau}\left(\frac{\exp(x) - \eta Q}{\alpha\exp(z)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\alpha-1}} + \tau\left(\exp(x) - \eta Q\right) + \eta Q\right) \tag{7}$$

Proof. The proof is straightforward, and detailed in the Appendix. Intuitively, when x is too large relative to y, the firm will not export, since exporting increases its marginal cost given decreasing returns to scale, and it may be optimal to keep these costs low. The opposite happens if y is large relative to x, in which case the firm will choose not to sell domestically and export all its output. □

Corollary 1. *Let x_0, y_0, z_0 be such that the firm chooses to sell domestically but not export, that is, $\exp(x_0) > \eta Q, x_0 > \bar{x}(y_0, z_0)$. Then $y_0 < \bar{y}(x_0, z_0)$. Similarly, if the firm chooses to export only, that is $\exp(y_0) > \eta Q, y_0 > \bar{y}(x_0, z_0)$. Then $x_0 < \bar{x}(y_0, z_0)$.*

Proof. The proof shows the first part of the corollary. The second part is straightforward given the first part. Proceed by contradiction, that is, assume that (x_0, y_0, z_0) are such that $x_0 > \bar{x}(y_0, z_0)$ and $y_0 > \bar{y}(x_0, z_0)$. The proof shows this leads to a contradiction.

Let $\tilde{x} = \exp(x_0) - \eta Q$ and $\tilde{y} = \exp(y_0) - \eta Q$.

$$x_0 > \bar{x}(y_0, z_0) \Rightarrow \tilde{x} > \gamma\left(\frac{\tilde{y}}{\tau\alpha\exp(z_0)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\alpha-1}} + \frac{\tilde{y}}{\tau} \tag{8}$$

$$y_0 > \bar{y}(y_0, z_0) \Rightarrow \tilde{y} > \frac{\gamma}{\tau}\left(\frac{\tilde{x}}{\alpha\exp(z_0)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\alpha-1}} + \tilde{x}\tau \tag{9}$$

Using equation (9) in equation (8),

$$\tilde{x} > \gamma^{\frac{\alpha}{\alpha-1}}\tilde{x}^{\frac{1}{\alpha-1}}\left(\tau\alpha\exp(z_0)\right)^{\frac{-2}{\alpha-1}} + \tau\tilde{x} \Leftrightarrow$$
$$(1-\tau) > \gamma^{\frac{\alpha}{\alpha-1}}\tilde{x}^{\frac{2-\alpha}{\alpha-1}}\left(\tau\alpha\exp(z_0)\right)^{\frac{-2}{\alpha-1}}$$

The last line is a contradiction, since the term on the left hand side is negative and the term on the right hand side nonnegative. □

Proposition 1 fully describes the behavior of the firm in equilibrium. Each firm observes its demand functions, that are determined by their demand shocks x and y via equations (3) and (4), and determines whether to sell to both markets, to one, or to none. A firm will not operate in any market when both shocks x and y are too low (so that demand is nonpositive). It will sell only domestically when x is very large relative to y, it will sell in both markets when x and y are relatively close, and it will only export when y is large relative to x. The extent to which one shock is large relative to the other is given by the productivity shock z through equations (6) and (7).

4 Parameter Values

4.1 Calibration

We set $\gamma = 2$, $\eta = 1$ and $\tau = 1.5$. These are normalizations that do not affect the results. Consider first η. This determines the degree to which consumers like the tradable good relative to the non-tradable. Since we are not focusing on the non-tradable good, this plays no role.

The parameters γ and τ only affect the estimation of the parameters for the distribution of shocks in the economy, but not the results or the counterfactuals. To see this, consider for example the role of τ, and the way we calibrate the parameters governing the distribution of foreign demand shocks (which we detail later). These parameters are calibrated to match the share of output exported and the share of firms that export. If one would pick a larger τ, then when it comes to matching the targets one would simply pick a larger mean or variance for the y shock. Similarly, γ affects the substitutability between varieties, which in turn determines the markup. Since we calibrate parameters to match the distribution of markups in the data, this again would simply affect the estimates of a distribution, not the results. Notwithstanding, we have done sensitivity experiments to confirm that the results do not depend on these parameters.

To determine the value of α, we rely on the estimate in Coşar et al. (2010), and set $\alpha = 1.69$. We later perform sensitivity experiments to show how this choice affects the results.

For the parameters governing the distribution of firms we use firm level data on domestic revenues, exports and markups to back out the unobserved triplet (x, y, z) consistent with the observed data, which requires us to eliminate some data that exhibit features not consistent with our model, such as negative markups. We treat each year as a different cross-section, which gives us a total of 21,441 firms to calibrate the model.[9] Also, we discard firms that the model suggests they should export but not sell domestically, on the basis that this does not happen in the data (there are only 18 firm-year cases in the entire sample, and only 3 firms that do this every period).

Loosely, the strategy is to work in two steps. The first calibrates the cross-section parameters. Our theory predicts that as $t \to \infty$, the economy converges to the following invariant distributions of shock realizations:

$$x \sim N\left(\hat{x}, \frac{\sigma_x^2}{1-\rho_x^2}\right), y \sim N\left(\hat{y}, \frac{\sigma_y^2}{1-\rho_y^2}\right), z \sim N\left(\hat{z}, \frac{\sigma_z^2}{1-\rho_z^2}\right)$$

We use the theory to back out the shock realizations in the data and then estimate μ_i and $\hat{\sigma}_i$, where $\hat{\sigma}_i = \frac{\sigma_i^2}{1-\rho_i}$, for $i = x, y, z$ via maximum likelihood.

The way to back out the shock realizations is the following. The model implies that the triplet x, y and z determines domestic sales, exports, and markups for each firm. Thus, using data on domestic sales, exports, and markups, we can reverse engineer the decision process and identify the shocks. We have data on domestic and foreign sales. We compute markups following De Loecker and Warzynski (2012).

Given the realization of the shocks, we compute the parameters of interest via maximum likelihood. This introduces a problem in the estimation of the y shocks, since the fact that we observe exports means that the shocks were sufficiently high, and therefore our sample is biased and not reliable for maximum likelihood.[10] We deal with this by calibrating the parameters μ_y and $\hat{\sigma}_y$ to match the share of output exported and the share of firms that export.

This procedure assumes that we know the value of Q. Fortunately, the free parameter M (the exogenous mass of firms) determines Q. So we set $Q = 1$ and back out the M that is consistent with this equilibrium value. We do this for all firms in all years from 1996 through 2005 (the estimation of markups requires us to drop 1995).

[9] See Appendix for further details.

[10] One can also argue that the observed distribution is biased, since a firm will sell domestically only when $\exp(x) > \eta Q$. This bias is easy to correct. We found that in general this restriction is not binding, and the results of correcting or not correcting are very similar, so we ignore this bias.

Figures 1 and 2 show the histograms of the shock realizations that we backed out from the data. At first sight, the assumption of a normal distribution seems to be reasonable.

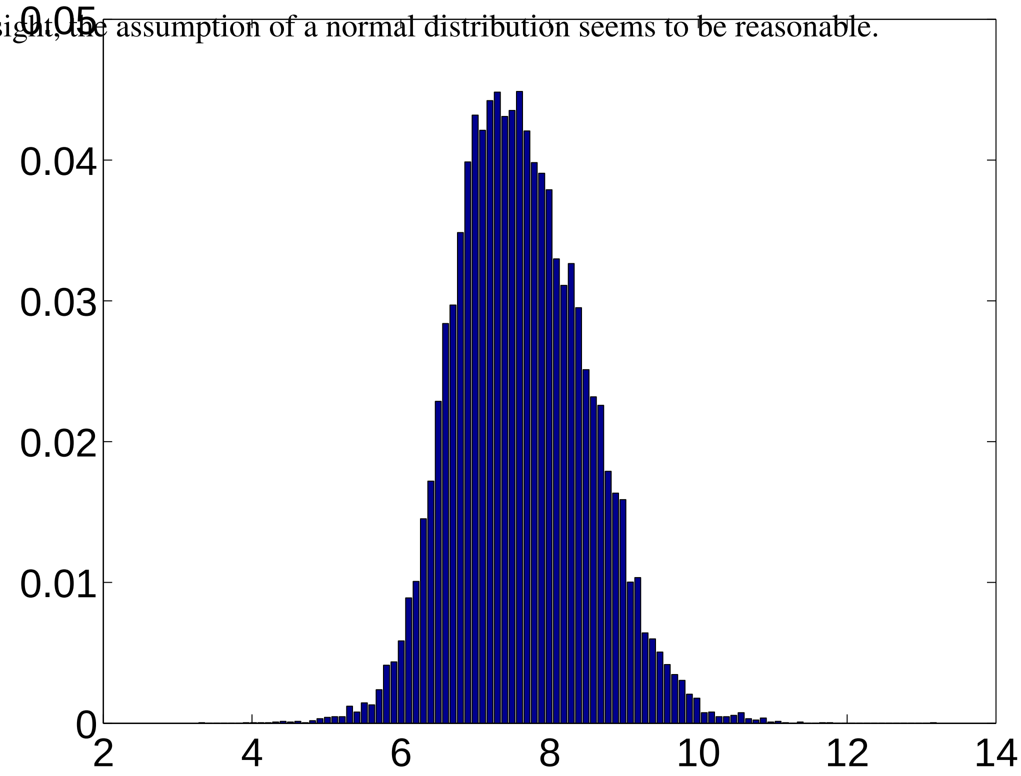

Figure 1: Distribution of domestic demand shocks backed out from data.

The last step involves separating σ_i from ρ_i, for $i = x, y, z$. Ideally, we would compute them performing regressions on each variable on its lags. The problem is that the observed data for x and y is biased, and as such the errors would not be zero mean, so we choose an alternative approach. We perform a simulated method of moments that works as follows. We first simulate the behavior of 160,000 firms for 1,000 periods, and keep only the last 10. Then we keep only firms with positive exports every period or zero exports every period.[11] Then we compute three autocorrelation coefficients: domestic sales for non-exporters, domestic sales for exporters, and exports for exporters. These autocorrelations in the data are 0.43, 0.39 and 0.42, respectively. We compare these to the same autocorrelation coefficients in the data. The calibration changes ρ so that the distance between data and model is as close as possible. Table 5 shows all the parameter values.

Notice the differences in the distributions of the x and y shocks $(\bar{x}, \bar{y}, \bar{\sigma}_x, \bar{\sigma}_y)$. While on average the x's are larger, the y's have a larger standard deviation. This is important, because low numbers

[11] We discard firms that enter and exit the export market because these will exhibit changes in domestic sales that are too abrupt, and the autocorrelation coefficient will be less informative of the random shock processes.

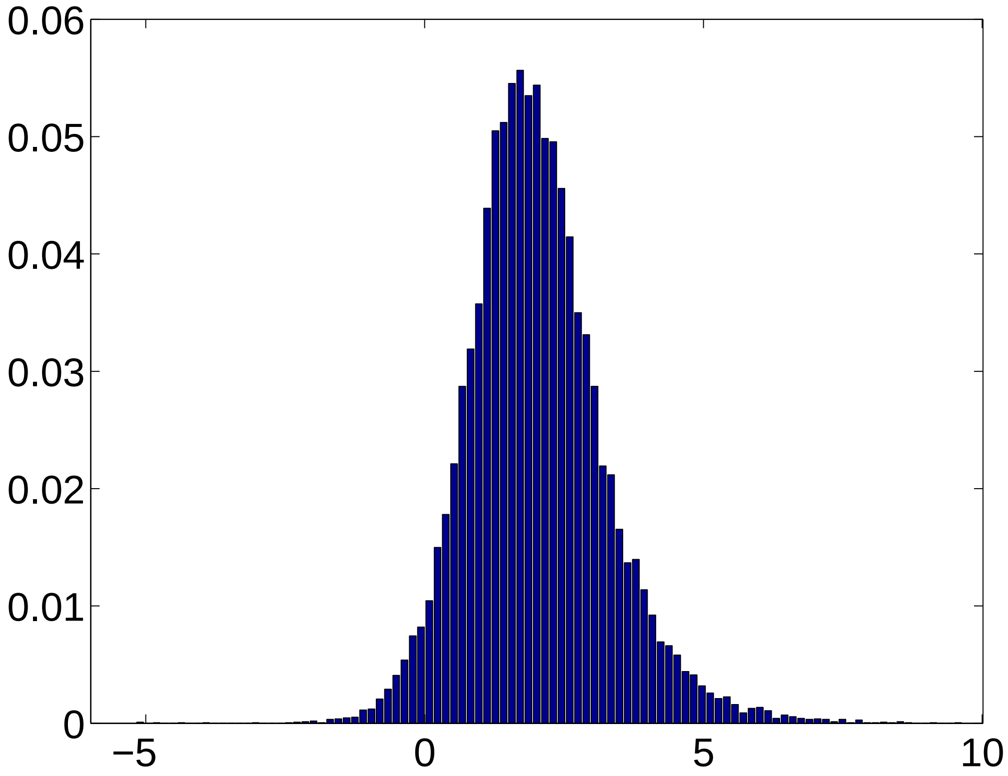

Figure 2: Distribution of productivity shocks backed out from data.

for y do not matter (the firm will be a non exporter), so a large standard deviation can generate large trade volumes in spite of small means. In this case, both the trade volume of 30 percent and the fact that 32 percent of firms export within a given year imply $\bar{x} > \bar{y}$ and $\bar{\sigma}_x < \bar{\sigma}_y$.

4.2 Fit of the Model

Before we move on to the findings, it is interesting to compare the simulations of the calibrated model with the data along calibrated dimensions, mainly, the cross-section of domestic sales, foreign sales, and markups.

Figures 3 through 5 compare these distributions in the model and the data. In all cases, the model distribution is quite close to the data distribution, indicating that our calibration strategy is quite successful at matching the intended targets.

It is not obvious that we should be able to reproduce the distributions in the data, since we are assuming that the shock processes are not correlated. If they are, the simulated model might deliver different distributions than the data.

For example, if the correlation between x and y in the data is positive, then we would expect firms with large x shocks to have lower domestic sales than in the model, since these firms also

Table 5: Calibrated Parameters

Parameter	Value	Target
α	1.69	Coşar et al. (2010)
η	1	Normalization
γ	2	Normalization
τ	1.5	Normalization
M	8×10^{-4}	Sets $Q = 1$
$\bar{x}$	7.60	Maximum Likelihood
$\bar{z}$	1.89	Maximum Likelihood
$\bar{\sigma}_x$	0.89	Maximum Likelihood
$\bar{\sigma}_z$	1.26	Maximum Likelihood
$\bar{y}$	6.53	$\frac{Exports}{Sales} = 30\%$ and 32% of firms export
$\bar{\sigma}_y$	1.61	
ρ_x	0.86	Method of Simulated Moments
ρ_y	0.96	Method of Simulated Moments
ρ_z	0.94	Method of Simulated Moments
σ_x	0.45	From ρ_x and $\bar{\sigma}_x$
σ_y	0.48	From ρ_y and $\bar{\sigma}_y$
σ_z	0.41	From ρ_z and $\bar{\sigma}_z$

have large exports. In the model, given the zero correlation between x and y, the firm might not export, and therefore allocate all its resources to the domestic market, producing larger domestic sales. The fact that the simulated distribution is similar to the data's implies that these correlations are not that strong.

5 Stylized Facts

This section focuses on the ability of the model to match the stylized facts previously discussed. These are: exporters charge markups that are on average 26% larger than non-exporters; entering the export market is associated with a markup increase of 2.5%; and the correlation between domestic and foreign sales is -0.19.

To test the model we perform simulations of the calibrated model. The exercise consists of simulating the behavior of 160,000 firms[12] for 1,000 periods, and keeping only the last 10 periods, to be consistent with data we are working with.

[12] Increasing the number of firms does not change the results in any considerable way.

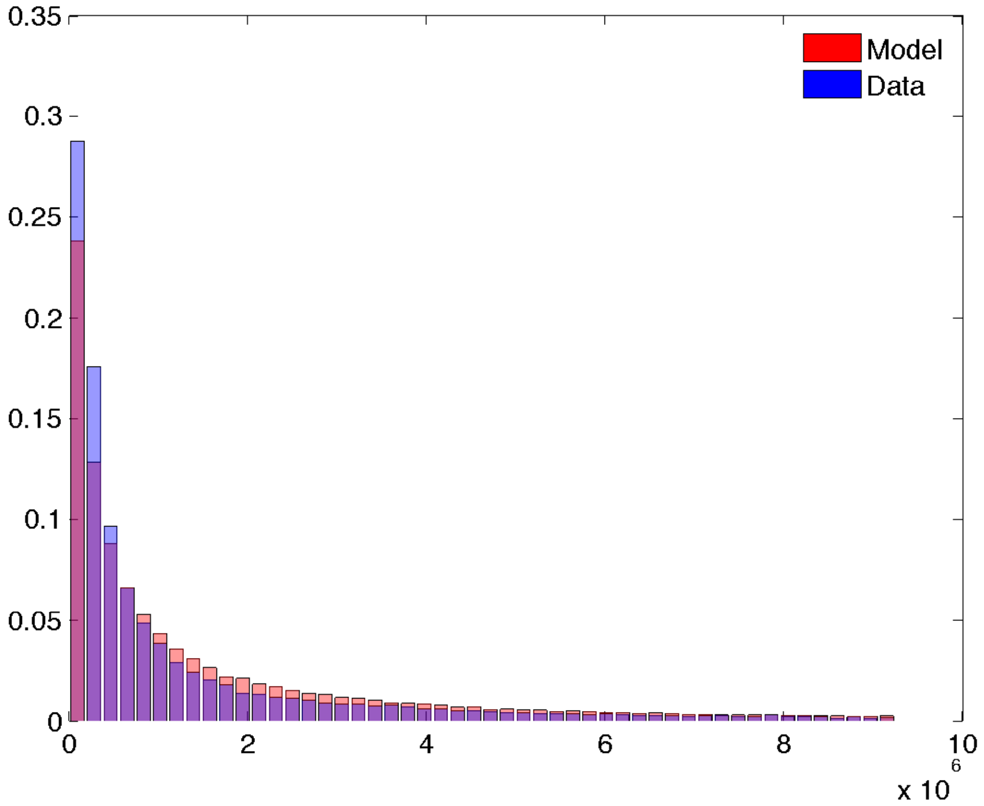

Figure 3: Distribution of domestic sales: model vs. data.

5.1 Markups

A key variable of interest in the trade literature is the effect of export entry on the markup of the firm. De Loecker and Warzynski (2012) find that: (i) exporters charge higher markups than non-exporters in the cross section; and (ii) entering the export market increases the markup.

Notice that given the assumption of decreasing returns to scale, one cannot separately identify domestic and foreign markups. Both empirically and in the model, we measure markups as the ratio of total revenues to total costs. That is,

$$Markup_{it} = \frac{p_{d,it}q_{d,it} + p_{x,it}q_{x,it}}{\exp(z_{it})(q_{d,it} + \tau q_{x,it})^{\alpha}}$$

where $p_{d,it}$ is the price at which firm i sells domestically in period t, $q_{d,it}$ is the domestic quantity sold, and replacing d with x is analogous for exports.

These observations also hold for Chilean exporters. Exporters charge on average markups that are 26 percent higher than non-exporters, while starting to export increases markups, on average, by 2.5 percent, as can be seen in Table 4.

Simulating the model, the cross-section shows that exporters charge, on average, a markup that is 37 percent larger than non-exporters. Markups increase by 1 percent when firms start to export.

Being so close to the data is remarkable, since these observations were not targeted in the

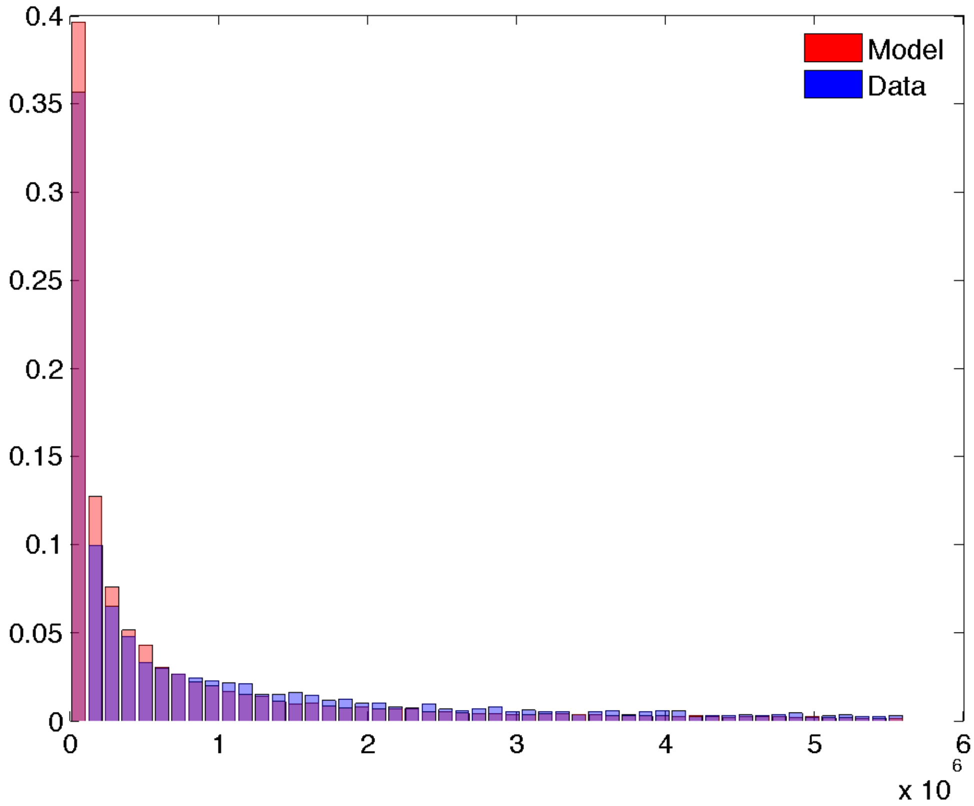

Figure 4: Distribution of foreign sales: model vs. data.

estimation. Notice that this is not an effect derived from the activity of exporting: other things changed, namely productivity and demand, which drove a firm to export.

5.2 Prices

We next ask how entering the export market affects the average price a firm sets for their goods. The aim of this section is to compare ourselves with García Marin and Voigtländer (2013), who find that average prices drop by 11% when entering the export market. They compute average prices using data on physical quantities. That is, using only single product firms, they compute $p_{av} = \frac{total-revenues}{units\ sold}$.

We compute the average price in our simulated data as

$$p_{av} = \frac{p_d q_d + p_x q_x}{q_d + \tau q_x}$$

We find that average prices drop by 10.1 percent. We also compute average prices without multiplying the units exported by the trade cost, i.e.,

$$\tilde{p}_{av} = \frac{p_d q_d + p_x q_x}{q_d + q_x}$$

$\tilde{p}_{av}$ drops by 7.8 percent when entering the export market. Both numbers are quite similar to those

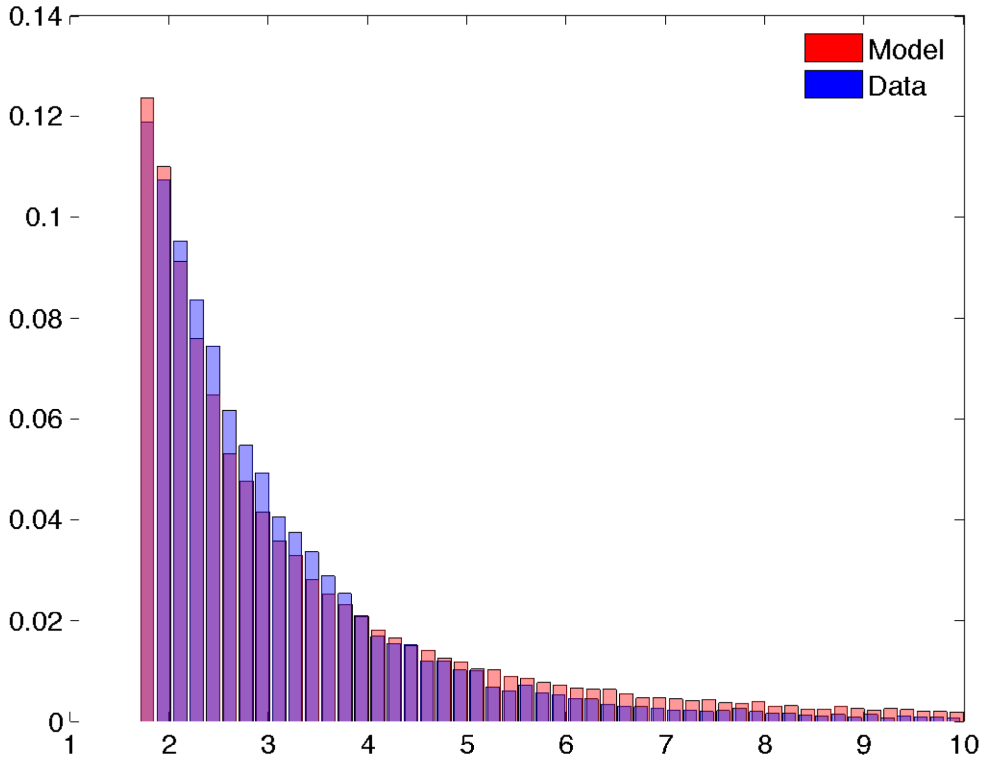

Figure 5: Distribution of markups: model vs. data.

found by García Marin and Voigtländer (2013).

Given the structure of the model, we can analyze the behavior of markups when lower trade costs drive a firm to start exporting. We do this in the following section.

5.3 Correlation between Exports and Domestic Sales

An important question in the paper is whether the model can account for the correlations between domestic and foreign sales in the data. This correlation is -0.19.

To measure the correlation in the model, we simulate the behavior of 160,000 firms for 1,000 periods and discard all but the last 10 periods, so that we end up with the same number of periods as our data. We then discard all firms that do not sell domestically for at least one year, and finally we discard all firms that never export.

The correlation between exports and domestic sales for the remaining firms is -0.15. That is, our model accounts for 79% of the correlation observed in the data.

Given the amount of heterogeneity in the data, we analyze this correlation for different groups of firms, depending on the frequency of exports. We disaggregate firms between those that are always observed exporting, those that export between 90 and 100% of the time, 75-90%, and 50-75% of the time. Table 6 summarizes our findings for different types of firms.

In the data, the correlation increases with exporting frequency: those firms that export more frequently show a larger correlation. In fact, the correlation is positive for firms that export more than 90% of the time.

The model can account for this pattern well. As in the data, the correlation increases with export frequency, and firms that export over 90% of the time exhibit a positive correlation. However, the model cannot generate changes as large as in the data across different groups of firms.

Table 6: Correlations and Export Frequency

Firm Type	Data	Model
All exporters	-0.19	-0.15
Export 100% of periods	+0.19	+0.04
Export 90%-100% of periods	+0.13	+0.01
Export 75%-90% of periods	-0.31	-0.10
Export 50%-75% of periods	-0.37	-0.18

Using the model, we can ask the reason for the observed relationship between exporting frequency and the correlation. We conjecture that this is due to the shape of the cost curve. Marginal costs are $\exp(z)\alpha Q^{\alpha-1}$, where Q is units produced. Since $1 < \alpha < 2$, this function is increasing and concave, so that marginal costs increase at a decreasing rate. Thus, marginal costs are relatively flatter (closer to constant returns) for larger firms. When marginal costs are flatter, the effect of decreasing returns becomes less important, and the positive effect of productivity on the correlation dominates, generating a positive correlation.

If this is the reason for the positive relation between correlation and exporting frequency, we should expect size and exporting frequency to be positively correlated. We verify this by performing the following regression on all firms (including non-exporters):

$$\log(Q_{it}) = \beta_0 + \beta_X N_X + \epsilon_{it}$$

where N_X is the number of periods with positive exports.

Our estimates confirm that exporting frequency is positively related to size. We estimate $\beta_X = 0.1432$, which implies that exporting for one additional period increases production by about 14%. This is significant at the 1 percent level. If we replace physical quantities with sales, we still get the same effect, with one additional year of exporting increasing total sales by 11%.

One reason why our model delivers correlations that are less extreme than the data may have to do with the correlation between size and the number of export destinations. While our data does not have the number of export destinations, it is usually the case that larger exporters also export to more countries (see, for example, Bernard et al. (2007)). Assuming that the demand shock from each country is independent, a firm exporting to a larger number of countries faces less aggregate demand fluctuations, and therefore the effect of changes in productivity have a larger weight on the correlation between domestic and foreign sales. Similarly, small firms, by exporting to fewer countries, have higher demand volatility, so demand shocks are key in driving the correlation.

While there is only one country in which firms can export to in the model, by calibrating our model to aggregate statistics (export volume and fraction of firms exporting) we are by construction targeting averages, which is why we perform better in the aggregate than when disaggregating.

6 Main Findings

The previous section shows that the model can match well the stylized facts, and this suggests that the model is reliable to determine the effects of trade costs on markups. To determine these effects, we drop trade costs from our benchmark value of 1.5 to 1.1.[13]

The exercise divides firms into two categories: firms that were already exporting before the change in trade costs and firms that started exporting only after the reduction. The idea is to capture changes along the intensive and extensive margins.

6.1 Markups

Reductions in trade barriers have very different effects for exporters (intensive margin) and firms that enter after trade costs drop (extensive margin). Markups increase along the intensive margin. The median increase is 7 percent, and the average increase is 11 percent. About 29 percent of firms reduce their markups. Figure 6 shows the increase across different firms. The extent to which markups increase is related to how elastic domestic and foreign demands are. To explore this further, we run the following regression:

$$\ln(\Delta Markup) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 |\eta_d| + \beta_2 |\eta_x| + \epsilon$$

where $\Delta Markup$ is the change in markup, $|\eta_d|$ is the absolute value of the elasticity of domestic demand to prices, and $|\eta_x|$ is a similar measure for foreign demand, defined as follows:

$$\eta_x = \frac{\partial q_x}{\partial p_x}\frac{p_x}{q_x} = -\frac{e^y - \eta Q - \gamma/2q_x}{\gamma/2q_x} \tag{10}$$

$$\eta_d = \frac{\partial q_d}{\partial p_d}\frac{p_d}{q_d} = -\frac{e^x - \eta Q - \gamma/2q_d}{\gamma/2q_d} \tag{11}$$

[13] We perform both general equilibrium counterfactuals (that is, the aggregate Q in equations (3) and (4) change) and in partial equilibrium, with Q unchanged. The results under both specifications are very similar, so we report the results under general equilibrium only.

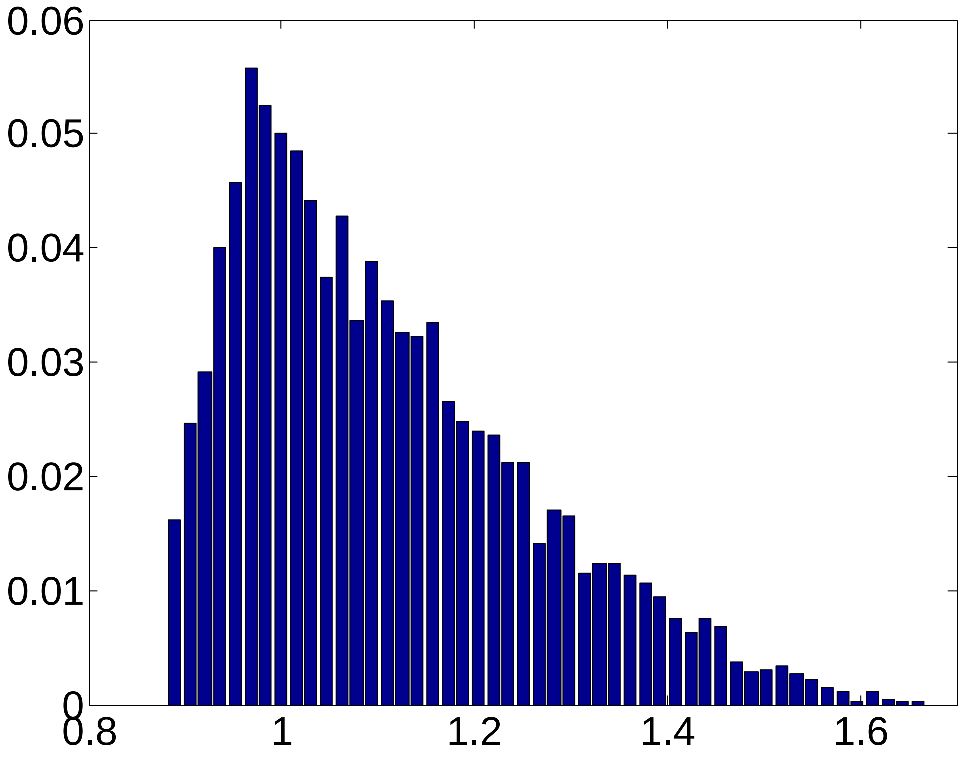

Figure 6: Increases in Mark-Ups Along the Intensive Margin when Trade Costs Drop

We evaluate the quantities q_d, q_x and Q before the drop in τ. Table 7 shows our results.

Parameter	Estimate	1 pct. confidence interval	R^2
β_0	0.2436	$[0.2380, 0.2492]$	0.5496
β_1	0.00013	$[0.000087, 0.000176]$	
β_2	-0.05	$[-0.049, -0.046]$	

Table 7: Elasticities and the change in domestic and foreign sales

What really matters in determining markups is the elasticity of foreign demand: the more elastic this demand, the smaller the increase in the markup. When foreign elasticity is very high, firms find it optimal to lower their prices more, expanding their output by more, and generating a smaller increase in the markup. A one percent increase in foreign demand elasticity reduces the increase in markups by 5 percent.

The reason why some firms increase their markups is that the reduction in trade costs is a reduction in marginal costs, and these firms do not fully pass on this decline in costs to prices. In fact, we know that only under constant elasticities of demand, where markups are constant, will firms pass the reduction entirely on to the consumer. In this case, the reduction in price is less than the reduction in cost, resulting in an increased markup.

Similarly, the reason why some firms reduce their markup is because of the increasing marginal cost. The drop in trade costs produces an increase in output, and this increases marginal costs. Again, firms only partially pass on this increase to the consumers, thus lowering markups.

In fact, the correlation between changes in markups and changes in marginal costs among these firms is -0.87, showing that changes in marginal costs drive almost all the changes in markups.

The behavior of markups is very different among firms that only export under the low trade cost regimes. These firms lower their markup (although profits increase due to the larger sales volume). The median and average markups fall by 5 percent. No firm increases the markup (the maximum change is no change). Figure 7 shows the distribution of the changes in markups for these firms.

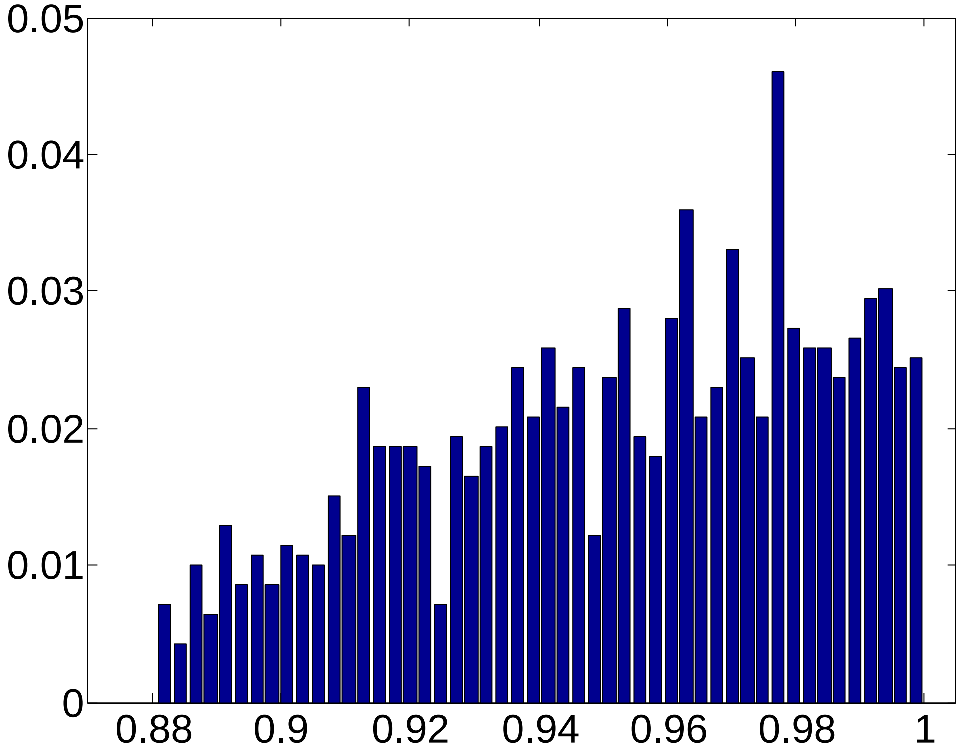

Figure 7: Increases in Markups Along the Extensive Margin when Trade Barriers Drop

This last observation suggests that entering the export market reduces the markup. Notice that the model can replicate well the fact that markups for exporters are larger in the cross-section, and that firms increase their markup when they start exporting. Nonetheless, when firms enter the export market *because* trade costs decline, markups decrease. Our counterfactuals suggest that exporters share certain characteristics (higher foreign and domestic demand), that imply large markups and exporting. That is, the large markup is not a consequence of a low trade cost.

To explore deeper the drivers of the change in markups we perform a regression similar to the one related to changes along the intensive margin. However, in this case, it makes no sense to include as a regressor the foreign elasticity of demand, since firms were not serving this market before the change in trade costs. Alternative, we focus on the absolute value of the change in quantities sold abroad. We do not includes changes in domestic sales because these are highly correlated with the changes in foreign quantities. Thus, we regress

$$\ln(\Delta Markup) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 q_x + \epsilon$$

All our estimates are significant at the one percent level, and the estimates are $\beta_0 = -0.04$ and $\beta_1 = -0.0003$, with an R^2 of 0.30. Thus, larger changes in quantities sold abroad lead to lower markups. These quantities are higher when foreign demand is more elastic. Thus, the intuition behind this result is that firms that face a high elasticity of foreign demand charge relatively lower foreign prices, and therefore reduce their markups by more.

In the next two subsections, we focus on the effect of trade costs on sales and prices.

6.2 Sales

When focusing only on exporters, several features stand out. The biggest change, as expected, is in exports, which increase on average by 47 percent, although the median increase is smaller, at 7 percent. No firm reduces its exports. There is a great degree of heterogeneity in this increase, as we show in Figure 8.[14]

More surprising is the behavior of domestic sales: most firms increase their domestic sales following a drop in trade costs (76 percent). On average, domestic sales increase by 5 percent, although the median increase is only 0.2 percent. Figure 9 shows the distribution of increases in domestic sales by firms that exported before and after the reduction in trade costs.

The facts that some firms sell more domestically after a reduction in tariffs is not present in standard international trade models. In our model, the reason for this is as follows. A reduction in trade costs implies a gain in efficiency and a reduction in costs. While this affects exports more than domestic sales, the decreasing returns to scale technology implies that cost reductions are also present for domestic output. When faced with a reduction in costs, firms tend to increase output. Which part of output increases the most depends on the elasticities of demand. Note also that the elasticities explain a great deal of the change in sales, producing an R^2 close to 0.5.

We ask the model how the elasticities affect the change in revenues. To do this, we perform

[14]For expositional purposes, the figures do not include the top and bottom 1 percent.

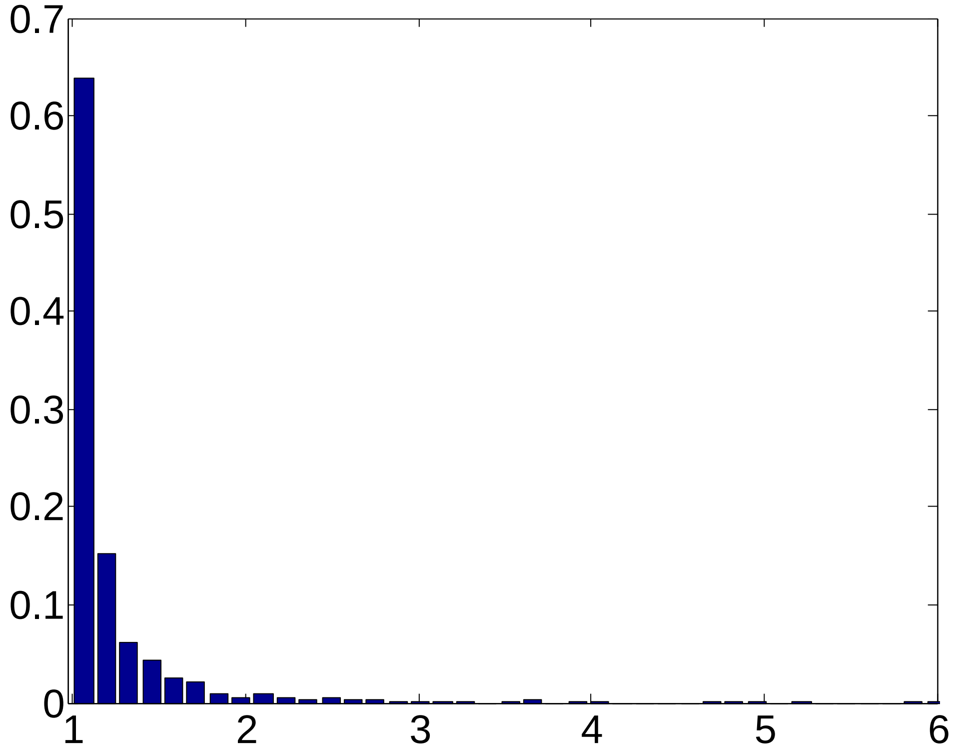

Figure 8: Increase in Exports Along the Intensive Margin

two regressions. The first regresses the increase in domestic sales (in logs) on the domestic and foreign elasticities of demand. The second regression does the same, but changes the dependent variable to export sales. That is, we regress

$$\log\left(\frac{\text{Domestic sales low } \tau}{\text{Domestic sales high } \tau}\right) = \beta_{0d} + \beta_{1d}|\eta_d| + \beta_{2d}|\eta_x| + \epsilon_d$$

$$\log\left(\frac{\text{Export sales low } \tau}{\text{Export sales high } \tau}\right) = \beta_{0x} + \beta_{1x}|\eta_d| + \beta_{2x}|\eta_x| + \epsilon_x$$

where η_d is domestic and η_x is foreign elasticity of demand, defined as in equations (10) and (11).

The estimates are very robust. They show that the elasticity of demand is key to determine the change in exports and domestic sales. Exports increase more when the elasticity of foreign demand is larger, and increase less if domestic demand is elastic.

Notice that the key elements for these results are decreasing returns to scale technologies, and heterogeneous elasticities of demand. Models based on Dixit-Stiglitz preferences cannot replicate this, even when paired with decreasing returns to scale technologies. In fact, in Melitz (2003), domestic sales can only be affected via a general equilibrium effect (wages increase after a reduction

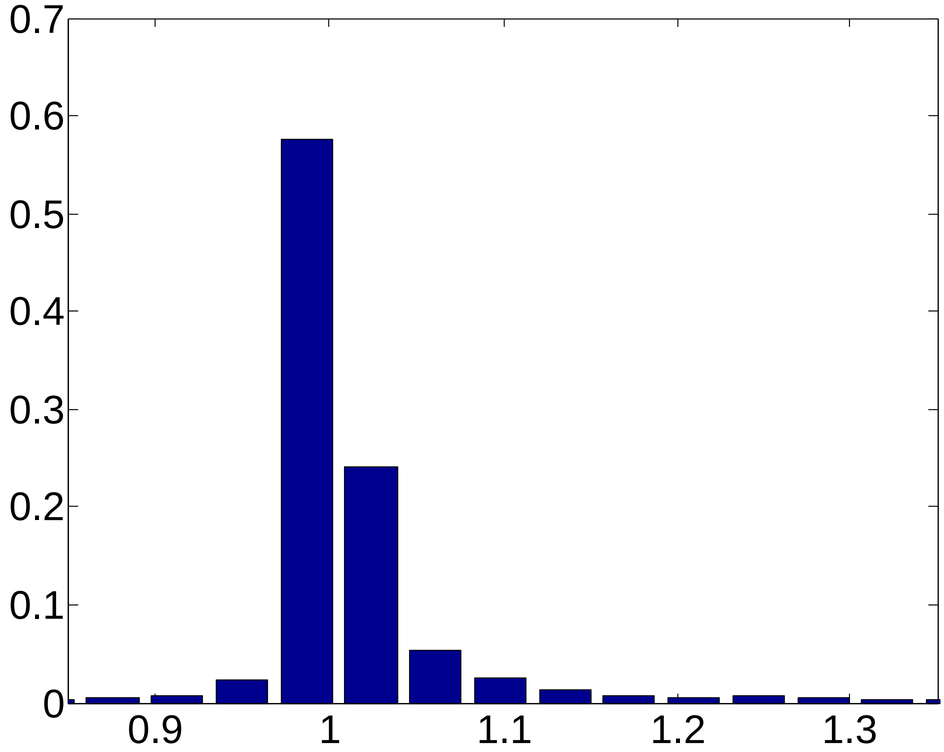

Figure 9: Increase in Domestic Sales Along the Intensive Margin

Parameter	Estimate	1 pct. confidence interval	R^2
β_{1x}	-0.0009	$[-0.0017, -0.0001]$	0.5001
β_{2x}	0.2673	$[0.2597, 0.2749]$	
β_{1d}	-0.0048	$[-0.0057, -0.0040]$	0.4613
β_{2d}	-0.0310	$[-0.0389, -0.0231]$	

Table 8: Elasticities and the change in domestic and foreign sales

in trade costs), and unequivocally domestic sales drop in this case.

The logic of decreasing returns to scale is also apparent when considering the impact on domestic sales for firms along the extensive margin. For these firms, the decline in trade costs does not represent an efficiency gain since these firms were not originally selling abroad. Instead, the decline in trade costs encourages these firms to enter the export market, which raises marginal costs, and tends to cause firms to substitute away from the domestic market. As can be seen in Figure 10, about 60 percent of firms reduce domestic sales, with an average reduction of 4.3 percent. The remaining 40 percent of firms hardly change their domestic sales (the maximum change is an increase of 1.2 percent). Again note that with constant marginal cost technology, there would be no impact on domestic sales for these firms.

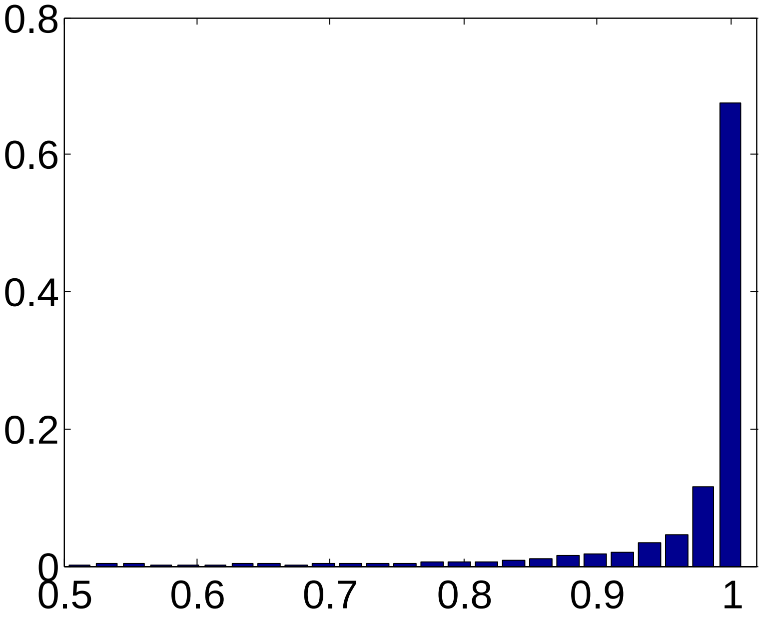

Figure 10: Change in Domestic Sales Along the Intensive Margin

6.3 Prices

Next, we analyze the effect of the reduction in trade costs on prices. The behavior of prices follows closely the behavior of sales, so we do not go into much detail in this section.

We focus first on changes along the intensive margin, that is, firms that were exporting prior to the change in trade costs. As one would expect, export prices drop with lower trade costs. The median drop is 7.9 percent, and the average drop is 7.3 percent. No price increases. Figure 11 shows a histogram with the change in export prices.

The story is somewhat different considering domestic prices. On average, these change very slightly. However, the changes tend to be price drops. The average change is a reduction of 1 percent, and the median a drop of 0.6 percent. Twenty five percent of prices increase. Figure 12 shows a histogram with the change in domestic prices.

The reason why domestic prices can increase or decrease is intuitive. A reduction in trade costs is a reduction in total cost. Given decreasing marginal returns, the marginal cost both for domestic and foreign quantities decreases, so domestic prices can go down. However, since trade costs affect exports more, exports increase more, increasing the marginal cost, and potentially increasing the domestic price.

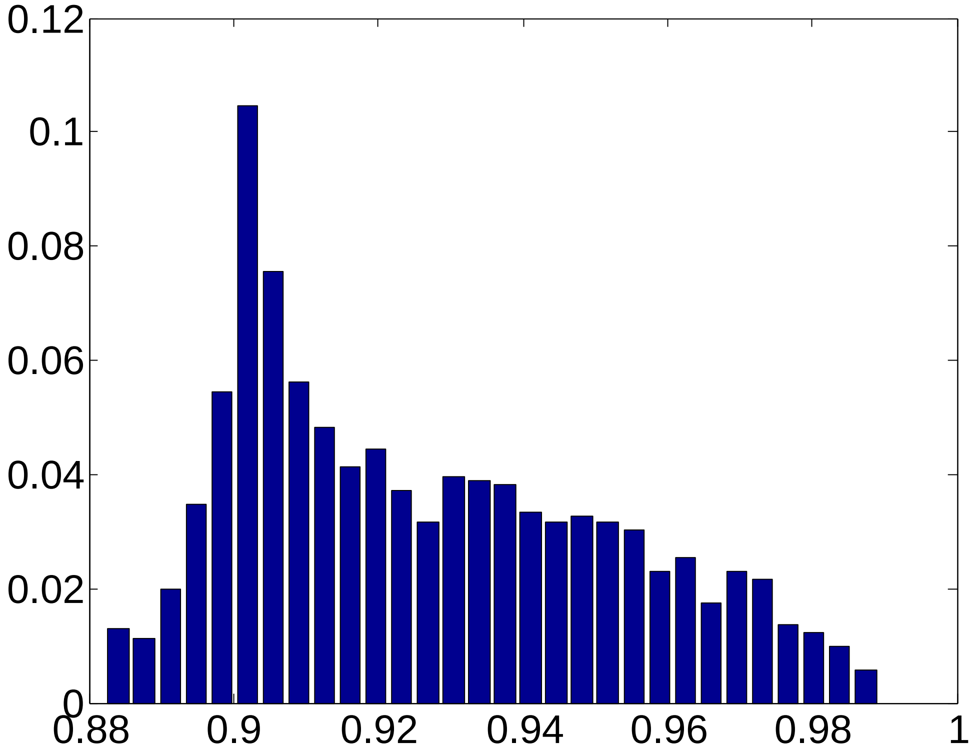

Figure 11: Increases in Export Prices by Established Exporters when Trade Barriers Drop

7 Sensitivity Analysis

A key parameter that we calibrate by following other related studies is α, which determines the curvature of the cost function. In this section, we show the results of changing α. Intuitively, a larger α implies a greater degree of decreasing returns to scale, so the correlations should be decreasing in α. We confirm this in our exercises when we change α and focus on the aggregate correlation between domestic and foreign sales. The upper panel of table 9 shows that reducing α from 1.69 to 1.5 increases the aggregate correlation from -0.15 to -0.07, and increasing α to 1.95[15] reduces the correlation to -0.25.

When we disaggregate these correlations dividing firms into their export frequency, we note that this change does not translate smoothly into each subgroup. In fact, while the correlation among infrequent exporters (firms exporting less than 75% of the time) shows similar changes as the aggregate correlation, the correlation among frequent exporters does not. The correlation for firms that export 100% of the time decreases when we move from $\alpha = 1.69$ to $\alpha = 1.5$.[16]

What explains this change is that more firms export 100% of the time. Panel 2 of Table 9

[15] A larger value of α has the consequence that, in some of the simulations, no firm chooses to export for 100 percent of the periods, and therefore we cannot compute some of the correlations we report.

[16] It increases when moving from $\alpha = 1.69$ to $\alpha = 1.95$, although this isn't apparent given our choice to round to 2 decimal points.

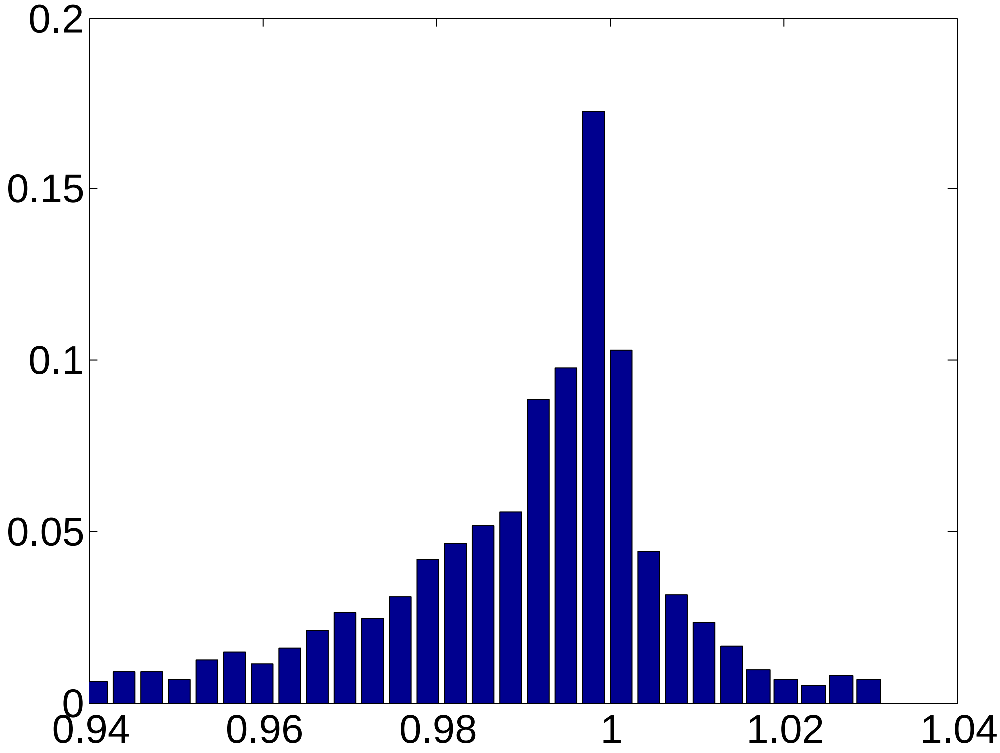

Figure 12: Increases in Domestic Prices by Established Exporters when Trade Barriers Drop

shows the fraction of firms in each export category. Under $\alpha = 1.69$, 14% of exporters export every period. This number increases to 39% when $\alpha = 1.5$. This implies that smaller firms enter this group, and these firms have steeper marginal cost curves, thus producing lower correlations and driving averages down.[17]

The reason why firms export more often when α is lower is that exporting is more attractive, since expanding output does not carry such a large increase in marginal costs. In fact, entering the export market (under constant trade costs) is associated with an increase in markup of 10 percent when $\alpha = 1.5$, compared to 1 percent in the benchmark case. When $\alpha = 1.95$, markups tend to drop by 3 percent when entering the export market.

Also, under $\alpha = 1.5$, exporters change a markup that is 55 percent larger than non-exporters (against 16 percent in the benchmark economy). When $\alpha = 1.95$, this premium is only 14 percent.

The counterfactuals also change in the expected direction. When dropping trade costs from $\tau = 1.5$ to $\tau = 1.1$, the average increase in markups along the intensive margin is 16 percent, compared to 11 percent in the benchmark case. Also, about 18 percent of firms reduce their markups, compared with 29 percent in the benchmark.

The intuition behind this is simple. Recall that the reason why some firms reduce their markups is related to an increase in their marginal costs, produced by the expansion in output. Under a lower

[17]Note that the percentages may add up to more than 100. This is because some firms are in more than one group. For example, the 90-100 group includes firms in the 100 group.

Table 9: Correlations under different values of α

Correlations and Export Frequency			
Firm Type	Benchmark (α = 1.69)	α = 1.5	α = 1.95
All exporters	-0.15	-0.07	-0.25
Export 100% of periods	+0.04	+0.02	+0.04
Export 90%-100% of periods	+0.01	+0.01	-0.02
Export 75%-90% of periods	-0.10	-0.07	-0.14
Export 50%-75% of periods	-0.18	-0.13	-0.23
Share of Firms and their Export Frequency			
Share of Exporters	Benchmark (α = 1.69)	α = 1.5	α = 1.95
Export 100% of periods	14%	39%	1%
Export 90%-100% of periods	20%	47%	2%
Export 75%-90% of periods	12%	15%	2%
Export 50%-75% of periods	21%	18%	10%

α, the expansion in output affects less marginal costs, and therefore they increase less. As a result, the effect of the fall in trade costs becomes more important, on average firms increase their markups by more, and less firms reduce their markups.

The effects along the extensive margin are similar. When $\alpha = 1.5$, the average reduction in markups is of 3.5 percent, compared to 4.5 percent in the benchmark. Again, the reason is that the increase in output does not increase the marginal costs as much, therefore dampening the reduction in markups.[18]

8 Conclusions

Understanding the effects of trade costs on markups is key for determining the effects of trade liberalization on competition. While previous studies focused on whether aggregate markups increase or not, we find very heterogeneous responses which depend on key firm characteristics.

Along the intensive margin, the reduction in trade costs tends to translate into an increase in markups, although this is not true for firms with very elastic foreign demand elasticities. Along the extensive margin, since reductions in trade costs do not imply reductions in firm costs, markups decrease.

[18]We omit the counterfactuals when $\alpha = 1.95$, but all the changes are in the opposite direction, as expected.

Decreasing returns to scale are important for understanding these two results. Along the intensive margin, a decline in trade costs represents a decline in marginal costs, which firms only partially pass on to prices, but expansion of output increases marginal costs, which again are only partially passed on to prices. The ultimate effect on markups depends upon the relative strength of these two competing forces.

Along the extensive margin, only the scale effect is operational, unambiguously reducing markups. Foreign demand faced by these firms is relatively elastic, which is why they were not exporting prior to the drop in trade costs, and insufficient to counteract the scale effect. The more output expands, the larger the reduction in markups.

Our analysis suggests that policymakers should anticipate very different adjustments to trade liberalization along different margins. If the goal is to bring price closer to marginal cost, the best policy is to act along the extensive margin. This could imply lowering trade costs in sectors where few firms export relative to the total number of firms.

Appendix

The following appendix details how we extracted the shock realizations from the data. Given the cross section of the shock realizations, we estimated the distributions of these shocks via maximum likelihood.

The process is as follows. Firms observe shocks x, y, z, unobservable to us, and makes production decisions, both for the export and domestic markets, which is available to us. In addition, information on sales plus other information on costs available in the database allows us to create markups for each firm, as in De Loecker and Warzynski (2012). The data on domestic sales, exports, and markups allows us to solve a non linear system of three equations and three unknowns that determine the shocks x, y and z.

Non Exporters

In the case of non exporters, we do not have relevant information on the export demand shock y. Thus, we can only extract the realization of the shocks x and z. We do this using data on mark ups (m) and sales (r). Let c be total (variable) cost.

$$m = \frac{r}{c} \Rightarrow c = \frac{r}{m}$$

Recall the first order condition and the price for these guys,

$$\begin{aligned} \exp(x) - \eta Q - \gamma q &= \beta \exp(z) q^{\beta-1} \\ p &= \exp(x) - \eta Q - \gamma/2q \end{aligned}$$

where $\exp(z)$ is the inverse of productivity. Thus,

$$pq - \frac{\gamma}{2} q^2 = \beta \exp(z) q^{\beta} = \beta c$$

This equation determines q for each firm. Given q, we can pin down the marginal cost $\beta \exp(z) q^{\beta-1}$ as follows.

$$\beta \frac{c}{q} = \beta \exp(z) q^{\beta-1}$$

Back to the first order condition,

$$\exp(x) - \eta Q = \beta \frac{c}{q} + \gamma q$$

We obtain x from this equation. The problem is that we don't know ηQ. However, we can always pick an arbitrary value for η and then calibrate the mass of firms in the economy such that $\eta Q = 1$ in equilibrium. This gives the shock realization x.

Given $x, \eta Q, q$, we can determine $\exp(z)$:

$$\exp(x) - \eta Q - \gamma q = \beta \exp(z) q^{\beta-1}$$

Thus, we have all the realizations of the random variables for non exporters.

Exporters

In this case we extract all shock realizations x, y, z as follows. Let r_d be the revenues of domestic sales and r_x exports. Multiplying the first order conditions by q_d and q_x delivers

$$r_d - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_d^2 = \beta \exp(z)(q_d + \tau q_x)^{\beta-1} q_d$$
$$r_x - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_x^2 = \beta \exp(z)(q_d + \tau q_x)^{\beta-1} \tau q_x$$

Adding these up

$$r_d + r_x - \frac{\gamma}{2}\left(q_d^2 + q_x^2\right) = \beta \exp(z)(q_d + \tau q_x)^{\beta} = \beta c$$

where $c = \frac{r_d + r_x}{m}$. Rearranging,

$$\tilde{q} = q_d^2 + q_x^2 = \frac{r_d + r_x - \beta c}{\gamma/2}$$

So we have $\left(q_d^2 + q_x^2\right) = \tilde{q}$. We can then find q_d and q_x by solving a system of two equations and two unknowns. The second equation combines the two equations above. The equations are

$$q_d^2 + q_x^2 = r_d + r_x - \beta c$$
$$\frac{r_d}{q_d} - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_d = \frac{r_x}{\tau q_x} - \frac{\gamma}{2\tau} q_x$$

q_d is therefore the solution to the following non-linear equation:

$$\frac{r_d}{q_d} - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_d = \frac{r_x}{\tau \sqrt{\tilde{q} - q_d^2}} - \frac{\gamma}{2\tau} \sqrt{\tilde{q} - q_d^2}$$

Given these variables, we obtain the marginal cost as

$$c' = \beta \exp(z)(q_d + \tau q_x)^{\beta-1} = \beta \frac{c}{q_d + \tau q_x}$$

Next obtain x, y from

$$\begin{aligned}
\exp(x) - \eta Q - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_d &= c' \\
\exp(y) - \eta Q - \frac{\gamma}{2} q_x &= \tau c'
\end{aligned}$$

Lastly, obtain $\exp(z)$ from

$$c' = \beta \exp(z)(q_d + \tau q_x)^{\beta-1}$$

Once we have all the data on $x, y, \exp(z)$, we can estimate the parameters in the distributions via Maximum Likelihood. Under the assumption that the processes for the variables are

$$\begin{aligned}
x' &= \rho_x x + (1-\rho_x)\mu_x + \epsilon_x, \quad \epsilon_x \sim N(0, \sigma_x^2) \\
y' &= \rho_y y + (1-\rho_y)\mu_y + \epsilon_y, \quad \epsilon_y \sim N(0, \sigma_y^2) \\
\log(\exp(z)') &= \rho_d \log(\exp(z)) + (1-\rho_d)\mu_d + \epsilon_d, \quad \epsilon_d \sim N(0, \sigma_d^2)
\end{aligned}$$

the distributions of the cross section in each variable are

$$\begin{aligned}
x &\sim N\left(\mu_x, \frac{\sigma_x^2}{1-\rho_x^2}\right) \\
y &\sim N\left(\mu_y, \frac{\sigma_y^2}{1-\rho_y^2}\right) \\
z &\sim N\left(\mu_d, \frac{\sigma_d^2}{1-\rho_d^2}\right)
\end{aligned}$$

However, we need to deal with the selection bias. We observe only x such that $\exp(x) \geq \eta Q$ and $\exp(y) \geq \bar{y}(x, \exp(z))$ where $\bar{y}(x, \exp(z))$ solves

$$\begin{aligned}
\gamma \left(\frac{\tilde{y}(x, \exp(z)) - \eta Q}{\tau \exp(z) \beta} \right)^{\frac{1}{\beta-1}} + \eta Q \left(1 - \tau^{-1}\right) + \frac{\tilde{y}(x, \exp(z))}{\tau} - \exp(x) = 0, \\
\bar{y}(x, \exp(z)) = \max\left\{\eta Q, \tilde{y}(x, \exp(z))\right\}
\end{aligned}$$

The densities for the variables x and z are

$$f_x(x) = \frac{normpdf\left(x, \mu_x, \frac{\sigma_x^2}{1-\rho_x^2}\right)}{1 - normcdf\left(\eta Q, \mu_x, \frac{\sigma_x^2}{1-\rho_x^2}\right)}$$

$$f_d(\exp(z)) = normpdf\left(\log(\exp(z)), \mu_d, \frac{\sigma_d^2}{1-\rho_d^2}\right)$$

However, it turns out that the restriction $\exp(x) \geq \eta Q$ hardly binds, so we ignore it. The problem is different in the case of the variable y. In this case, we have a problem of missing data, and it is not missing at random. One option would be to perform a censored Maximum Likelihood Estimation. The problem is that, since most firms are non exporters in the sample, there are too many missing observations, and therefore the estimates are not likely going to be good. Thus, we do not estimate the distribution of y. Instead, we calibrate the relevant parameters μ_y and σ_y so that we match the ratio of total exports to total sales in the economy, and the proportion of firms that export.

References

Ahn, JaeBin and Alexander McQuoid, "Capacity constrained exporters: micro evidence and macro implications," 2013.

Almeida, Rita and Ana M. Fernandes, "Explaining local manufacturing growth in Chile: the advantages of sectoral diversity," *Applied Economics*, June 2013, *45* (16), 2201–2213.

Arkolakis, Costas, Arnaud Costinot, Dave Donaldson, and Andres Rodriguez Clare, "The Elusive Pro-Competitive Effects of Trade," 2012.

Atkeson, Andrew and Ariel Burstein, "Pricing-to-Market, Trade Costs, and International Relative Prices," *American Economic Review*, December 2008, *98* (5), 1998–2031.

_ **and Ariel Tomás Burstein**, "Innovation, Firm Dynamics, and International Trade," *Journal of Political Economy*, 06 2010, *118* (3), 433–484.

Berman, Nicolas, Antoine Berthou, and Jerome Hericourt, "Export Dynamics and Sales at Home," August 2011.

Bernard, Andrew B., J. Bradford Jensen, Stephen J. Redding, and Peter K. Schott, "Firms in International Trade," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Summer 2007, *21* (3), 105–130.

Blum, Bernardo, Sebastain Claro, and Ignatius Horstmann, "Occasional vs Perennial Exporters: The Impact of Capacity on Export Mode," *Journal of International Economics*, May 2013, *90, 1*, 65–74.

Coşar, A Kerem, Nezih Guner, and James Tybout, "Firm dynamics, job turnover, and wage distributions in an open economy," Technical Report, National Bureau of Economic Research 2010.

De Loecker, Jan and Frederic Warzynski, "Markups and Firm-Level Export Status," *American Economic Review*, May 2012, *102* (6), 2437–71.

_ **, Pinelopi K. Goldberg, Amit K. Khandelwal, and Nina Pavcnik**, "Prices, Markups and Trade Reform," NBER Working Papers 17925, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc March 2012.

Eaton, Jonathan and Samuel Kortum, "Technology, Geography, and Trade," *Econometrica*, September 2002, *70* (5), 1741–1779.

Edmond, Chris, Virgiliu Midrigan, and Daniel Yi Xu, "Competition, Markups, and the Gains from International Trade," Economics Series 299, Institute for Advanced Studies July 2013.

García Marin, Alvaro and Nico Voigtländer, "Exporting and Plant-Level Efficiency Gains: Its in the Measure," NBER Working Papers 19033, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc May 2013.

Kohn, David, Fernando Leibovici, and Michal Szkup, "Financial Frictions and New Exporter Dynamics," January 2012.

Liu, Lili, "Entry-exit, learning, and productivity change Evidence from Chile," *Journal of Development Economics*, 1993, *42* (2), 217 – 242.

Melitz, Marc J., "The Impact of Trade on Intra-Industry Reallocations and Aggregate Industry Productivity," *Econometrica*, 2003, *71* (6), pp. 1695–1725.

Melitz, Marc J and Gianmarco IP Ottaviano, "Market size, trade, and productivity," *The review of economic studies*, 2008, *75* (1), 295–316.

Nguyen, Daniel and Georg Schaur, "Cost Linkages Transmit Volatility Across Markets," May 2011.

Pavcnik, Nina, "Trade Liberalization, Exit, and Productivity Improvements: Evidence from Chilean Plants," *The Review of Economic Studies*, 2002, *69* (1), 245–276.

Rho, Young-Woo and Joel Rodrigue, "Firm-Level Investment and Export Dynamics," January 2012.

Rubini, Loris, "Innovation and the Trade Elasticity," *Journal of Monetary Economy*, 2014, *66*, 32–46.

Ruhl, Kim and Jonathan Willis, "New Exporter Dynamics," November 2008.

Soderbery, Anson, "Market Size, Structure, and Access: Trade with Capacity Constraints," October 2011.

Spearot, Alan C., "Firm Heterogeneity, New Investment and Acquisitions," *The Journal of Industrial Economics*, 2012, *60* (1), 1–45.

Vannoorenberghe, G., "Firm-level volatility and exports," *Journal of International Economics*, 2012, *1*.