

CHAPTER 11
CONTROVERSIES IN TRADE POLICY

✚(Chapter 12 of the textbook)

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11-1

+ Preview

11-2

Arguments for “activist” trade policies

- Externality or appropriability problem
- Strategic trade policy with imperfect competition

Arguments concerning trade and people

- Trade and labor
- Trade and culture

Arguments concerning trade and environment

+ Arguments for an Activist Trade Policy

11-3

- An activist trade policy: government policies actively support export industries through subsidies.
- Arguments for activist trade policies use an assumption that import substituting industrialization (chapter 10) and the cases against free trade (chapter 9) used: market failure.
 - Externalities or an appropriability problem
 - Imperfect competition that results in revenues that exceed all (opportunity) costs: “excess” profits.

+ Technology and Externalities

11-4

- Firms that invest in new technology create knowledge that other firms can use without paying: an appropriability problem.
- Governments may want to actively encourage investment in technology when externalities in new technologies create a high marginal social benefit.

+ Technology and Externalities (cont.)

11-5

- When considering whether a government should subsidize high technology industries, consider:
 1. The ability of governments to subsidize the right activity.
 - Much activity by high technology firms has nothing to do with generating knowledge: subsidizing equipment purchases or non-technical workers generally does not create new technology.
 - Knowledge and innovation are created in industries that are not usually classified as high tech.
 - US: Instead of subsidizing specific industries, subsidize research and development through the tax code:
 - research and development expenses can be deducted from corporate taxable income.

+ Technology and Externalities (cont.)

11-6

2. The economic importance of externalities.
 - It is difficult to determine the quantitative importance that externalities have on the economy.
 - Therefore, it is difficult to say *how much* to subsidize activities that create externalities.
3. Externalities may occur across countries as well.
 - No individual country has an incentive to subsidize industries if all countries could take advantage of the externalities generated in a country.

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy

11-7

- Imperfectly competitive industries are typically dominated by a few firms that generate monopoly profits or **excess profits** (or excess returns).
 - Excess profits refer to revenues that exceed all opportunity costs: profits higher than what equally risky investments elsewhere in the economy can earn.
- In an imperfectly competitive industry, government subsidies can shift excess profits from a foreign firm to a domestic firm.
- Let's use a simple example to illustrate this point.

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)

11-8

- Example (called the Brander-Spencer analysis):
 - Two firms (Boeing and Airbus) compete in the international market but are located in two different countries (U.S. and EU).
 - Both firms are interested in manufacturing airplanes, but each firm's profits depends on the actions of the other.
 - Each firm decides to produce or not depending on profit levels.

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)

11-9

Table 12-1: Two-firm competition

Suppose Boeing enters the market first and it decides to produce

Airbus

		<i>Produce</i>		<i>Don't Produce</i>	
Boeing	Produce	-\$5B	-\$5B	\$100B	\$0B
	Don't produce	\$0B	\$100B	\$0B	\$0B

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)

11-10

- The predicted outcome depends on which firm invests/produces first.
 - If Boeing produces first, then Airbus will not find it profitable to produce.
 - If Airbus produces first, then Boeing will not find it profitable to produce.
- But a subsidy of 25 by the European Union can alter the outcome by making it profitable for Airbus to produce *regardless of Boeing's action*.

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)

11-11

Table 12-2: Effects of a subsidy to Airbus

Now suppose the EU subsidizes Airbus with \$25B if it produces

Airbus

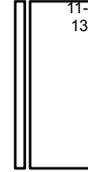
		<i>Produce</i>	<i>Don't Produce</i>
Boeing	Produce	-\$5B \$20B	\$100B \$0B
	Don't produce	\$0B \$125B	\$0B \$0B

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)

11-12

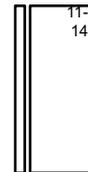
- If Boeing expects that the European Union will subsidize Airbus, Boeing will be deterred from entering the industry.
 - Thus, the subsidy of 25 will generate profits of 125 for Airbus.
 - The subsidy raises profits more than the amount of the subsidy itself because of its deterrent effect on foreign competition.
- ⇒ government policy to give a domestic firm a strategic advantage in production is called a **strategic trade policy**.

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy



- Criticisms of this analysis include:
 1. Practical use of strategic trade policy requires more information about firms than is likely available.
 - Difficult to fill the entries in the table with confidence => The predictions differ if the numbers are slightly different.
 - if governments or economists are not exactly right when predicting the profits of firms => a subsidy policy may turn out to be a costly misjudgment.
 - For example, what if Boeing has a better technology which only it recognizes, so that even if Airbus produces Boeing still finds it profitable to produce. Airbus however cannot produce profitably if Boeing enters.

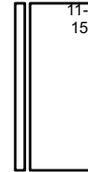
+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)



Suppose **Boeing has a production advantage** that changes the profit of each company – **No subsidy**

		<i>Airbus</i>	
		<i>Produce</i>	<i>Don't Produce</i>
Boeing	Produce	\$5B -\$20B	\$125B \$0B
	Don't produce	\$0B \$100B	\$0B \$0B

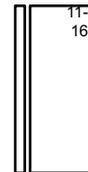
+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)



When Boeing has an advantage, a subsidy of \$25B from the EU does not deter Boeing from producing and it costs more than the profit that it generates for Airbus

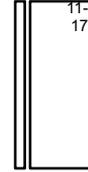
		<i>Airbus</i>	
		<i>Produce</i>	<i>Don't Produce</i>
Boeing	Produce	\$5B \$5B	\$125B \$0B
	Don't produce	\$0B \$125B	\$0B \$0B

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)



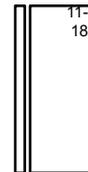
- The predicted outcome when the European Union subsidizes Airbus is now that both firms produce and both earn only 5.
 - The subsidy no longer raises profits by more than the subsidy because it failed to deter foreign competition.
- Thus, it is not at all evident that a subsidy would be worthwhile => a terrible idea. It could waste resources that could be used elsewhere in the economy.

+ Imperfect Competition and Strategic Trade Policy (cont.)



2. Foreign retaliation also could result:
 - Strategic trade policies: beggar-thy-neighbor policies that increase our welfare at the other countries' expense.
 - if the European Union subsidizes Airbus, the U.S. could subsidize Boeing,
 - which would deter neither firm from producing, start a trade war and waste taxpayer funds.
3. Strategic trade policy, like any trade policy, could be manipulated by politically powerful groups.

+ Preview



Arguments for “activist” trade policies

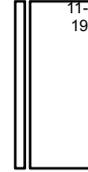
- Externality or appropriability problem
- Strategic trade policy with imperfect competition

Arguments concerning trade and people

- Trade and labor
- Trade and culture

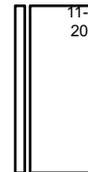
Arguments concerning trade and environment

+ Trade and Labor



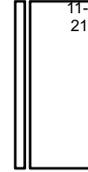
- An increase in manufactured exports from low and middle income countries has been a major change in the world economy over the last generation.
- Compared to rich country standards, workers who produce these goods are paid low wages and may work under poor conditions.
- Some have opposed free trade because of this fact.

+ Trade and Labor (cont.)



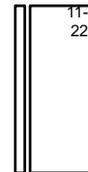
- One example of this situation is the *maquiladora* sector: Mexican firms that produce for export to the U.S.
- Opponents of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have argued that it is now easier for employers to replace high wage workers in the U.S. with low wage workers in Mexico.

+ Trade and Labor (cont.)



- The above claim can be true, but we can not conclude that trade hurts workers.
- A Ricardian model predicts that while wages in Mexico should remain lower than those in the U.S. because of low productivity in Mexico, they will rise relative to their pre-trade level.
- A Heckscher-Ohlin model does predict that unskilled workers in the U.S. will lose from NAFTA, but it also predicts that unskilled workers in Mexico will gain.

+ Table 12-3: Real Wages



(A) Before Trade

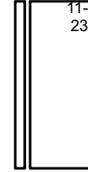
	High-Tech Goods/Hour	Low-Tech Goods/Hour
United States	1	1
Mexico	1/8	1/2

(B) After Trade

	High-Tech Goods/Hour	Low-Tech Goods/Hour
United States	1	2
Mexico	1/4	1/2

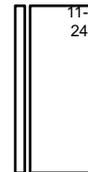
The real wage in each case is simply the quantity of each good that a worker could produce in one hour

+ Trade and Labor (cont.)



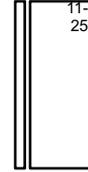
- The standard economist's argument is that despite the low wages earned by workers in developing countries, **those workers are better off than they would be if trade had not taken place.**
- Evidence consistent with these predictions would show that wages in *maquiladoras* have risen relative to wages in other Mexican sectors.
- We could also compare working conditions in *maquiladoras* with the working conditions in other Mexican sectors.

+ Trade and Labor (cont.)



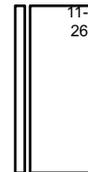
- But activists do not accept this argument. They argue that increased trade makes workers in both advanced and developing countries worse off.
- Labor activists want to include labor standards in trade negotiations (EVFTA - Chapter 15)
 - However, labor standards imposed by foreign countries are opposed by governments of low and middle income countries.
 - International standards could be used as a protectionist policy or a basis for lawsuits when domestic producers did not meet them.
 - Standards set by high income countries would be expensive for low and middle income producers.

+ Trade and Culture



- Some activists believe that trade destroys culture in other countries.
 - This belief neglects the principle that we should allow people to define their culture through the choices that *they* make, not through standards set by others.
 - And any economic change, not just trade, leads to changes in everyday life.

+ Preview



Arguments for “activist” trade policies

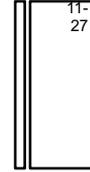
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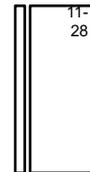
Arguments concerning trade and environment

+ Trade and the Environment



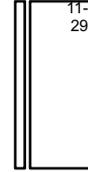
- Many critics argue that globalization is bad for the environment.
 - E.g: The heavy logging of Southeast Asian forests carried out to produce forest products for sale to Japanese and Western markets.
 - Compared to rich country standards, environmental standards in low and middle income countries are lax and weak.
 - Worsen the environment
- Some have opposed free trade because of this fact.

+ Trade and the Environment (cont.)



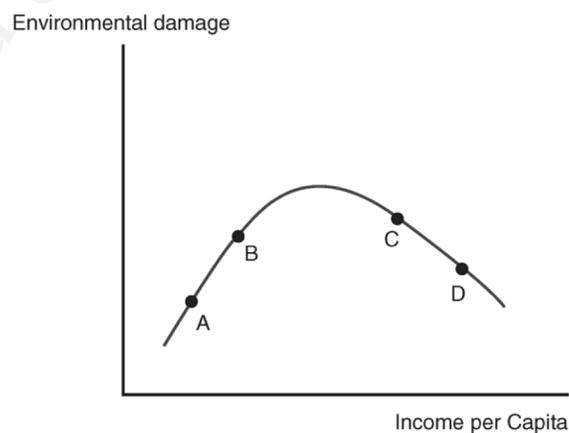
- Based on this argument, some environmental activists want to include environmental standards in trade negotiations (EVFTA - Chapter 15).
 - However, environmental standards imposed by foreign countries are opposed by governments of low and middle income countries.
 - International standards could be used as a protectionist policy or a basis for lawsuits when domestic producers did not meet them. "KICKING AWAY THE LADDER"
 - Standards set by high income countries would be expensive for low and middle income producers.

+ Trade and the Environment (cont.)



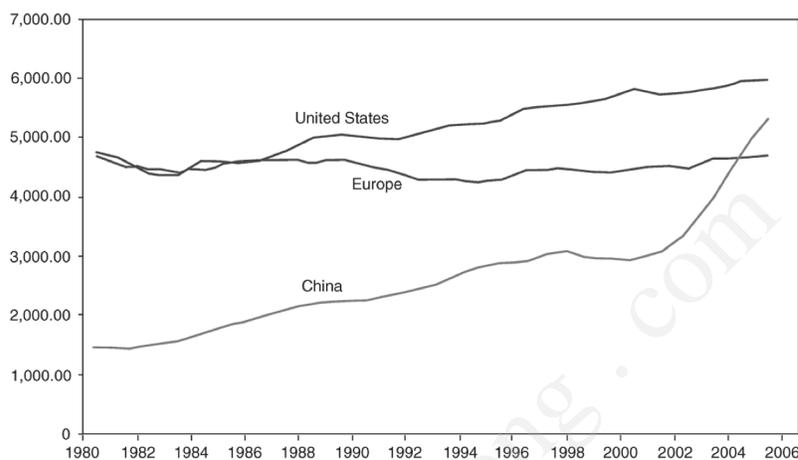
- BUT we can not conclude that trade hurts the environment,
 - Consumption and production in the absence of trade have degraded the environment.
- Possibly partly due to participate in trade, poor countries grow richer, and then:
 - they produce more and can consume more, leading to more environmental degradation.
 - But as countries grow richer, they want to pay for more stringent environment protection.
- Both of these ideas are represented as an **environmental Kuznets curve**:
 - an inverted “U-shaped” relationship between environmental degradation and income per person

+ Fig. 12-3: The Environmental Kuznets Curve



+ Fig. 12-4: Carbon Dioxide

Emissions of Carbon Dioxide

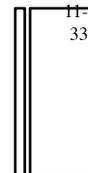


Source: Energy Information Agency

+ Trade and the Environment (cont.)

- Bad environment in developing countries are also due to pollution haven (giả thuyết về nơi ẩn giấu ô nhiễm)
- Because rich countries usually have strict environmental regulations and poor countries do not, environmentally hazardous activities may be moved to poor countries.
 - A **pollution haven** is a place where an economic activity that is subject to strict environmental controls in some countries is moved to (sold to) other countries with less strict regulation.

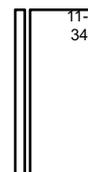
+ Summary



- 3 controversial issues in trade policies
 - Government intervention in high-technology sector in developed countries by using subsidizing policies/strategic trade policies
 - Effects of trade on labor and culture
 - Effects of trade on environment

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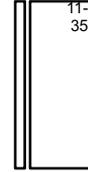
+ Summary (cont.)



1. Activist trade policies

- Government should subsidize high-tech sectors to promote exports of these sectors under two conditions of market failure (externalities and imperfect competition)
- One argument for an activist trade policy is that investment in high technology industries produces externalities for the economy (appropriability problem) => Government should support high-tech export sectors through subsidies
 - 3 debatable issues:
 - The ability of the government to subsidize the right activities
 - The degree of economic importance of externalities
 - Externalities can go across nations

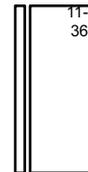
+ Summary (cont.)



1. **Activist trade policies**

- A second argument for an activist trade policy is that governments can use strategic trade policies to subsidize and give domestic firms a strategic advantage in industries with excess profits (imperfect competition).
 - But it is unclear if such a policy would succeed at giving a firm a strategic advantage or if it would be worthwhile.

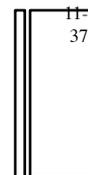
+ Summary (cont.)



2. Trade and workers

- Some have opposed free trade because of the fact that workers in low and middle income countries earn lower wages and have worse working conditions than workers in high income countries, BUT”
 - Workers in low and middle income countries are predicted to have lower wages due to lower productivity
 - Workers in low and middle income countries yet still have higher wages compared to their situation without trade.

+ Summary (cont.)

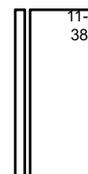


3. Trade and environment

- Some have opposed free trade because of the fact that environmental in low and middle income countries are degraded, BUT
 - Other activities can harm environment without trade such as production and consumption
 - Kuznets curve: trade increase income => reduce pollution
 - Pollution haven: FDI activities

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+ Summary (cont.)



4. Some activists have proposed that trade negotiations involve labor, environmental or “cultural” standards, but these standards are generally opposed by governments of low and middle income countries.
 - Protectionist policies
 - Costly for low and middle income countries

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THE END

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