Intangibles, markups, and the measurement of productivity growth

Nicolas Crouzet and Janice Eberly

Northwestern University

Since late 90's, measured TFP growth has declined

The decline in TFP growth

	1947-1996	1997-2018	Change
GDP growth (p.p.)	3.62	2.68	-0.93
TFP growth $\widehat{dZ/Z}$ (p.p.)	1.36	0.86	-0.50

Fernald (2014)

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 \neq declining pace of innovation

(Gordon, 2017)

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Related literature

1. Measurement of productivity growth:

Solow (1957), Jorgenson and Griliches (1968), Basu and Fernald (2001), Corrado et al. (2009), Cette et al. (2016), Byrne et al. (2017), Fernald et al. (2017)

This paper : bias in input shares and capital growth; organization capital

- 2. Investment-specific technical change:
 - · Greenwood et al. (1997), Greenwood et al. (1998), Basu et al. (2013), Gourio and Rognlie (2020)

This paper : markups+intan \rightarrow overestimate contrib. of g_Q to growth

3. Macroeconomic implications of rising rents and rising intangibles:

• Gutiérrez and Philippon (2017,2018); Farhi and Gourio (2018); Barkai (2020); De Loecker et al. (2020); Crouzet and Eberly (2020); Edmond, Midrigan and Xu (2020)

This paper : aggregate technical change, not allocative efficiency

1. Theory

The simple Solow residual approach

$$\frac{\widehat{dZ}}{Z} = \frac{\widehat{dY}}{Y} - (1 - \hat{s}_L)\frac{\widehat{dK}}{K} - \hat{s}_L\frac{\widehat{dL}}{L}$$

<u>A1</u>: Constant returns to scale in production

<u>A2</u>: Variable cost minimization

<u>A3</u>: Price = Marginal cost

A4:
$$\widehat{dX/X} = dX/X$$

 $\frac{dZ}{Z} = \frac{dY}{V} - (1 - \epsilon_L)\frac{dK}{K} - \epsilon_L \frac{dL}{L}$ $\epsilon_L = \frac{WL}{MCY}$ $\hat{s}_L = \frac{WL}{PY} = \frac{WL}{MCY} = \epsilon_L$ $\frac{\widehat{dZ}}{\overline{Z}} = \frac{dZ}{\overline{Z}}$

Measurement bias from markups

$$A3: P = \mu MC, \mu > 1$$

Result 1 :

$$\frac{\widehat{dZ}}{Z} - \frac{dZ}{Z} = \hat{s}_L (1 - \mu) \left(\frac{dK}{K} - \frac{dL}{L} \right) < 0$$

 \hat{s}_L <u>under</u>-estimates ϵ_L :

$$\hat{s}_L = \mu^{-1} \epsilon_L < \epsilon_L$$

Basu and Fernald (2002), Fernald and Neiman (2011)

Measurement bias from markups

		1947-1996	1997-2018	Change
\hat{s}_L		0.68	0.62	-0.04
$\widehat{dZ/Z} - dZ/Z$	$(\epsilon_L = 1.00)$	-0.73	-0.84	-0.11
$\widehat{dZ/Z} - dZ/Z$	$(\epsilon_L=0.68)$	0.00	-0.09	-0.09

9bps, vs. 50bps observed decline in $\widehat{dZ/Z}$.
$$A4: \quad \widehat{K} \neq K$$
$$\widehat{P}\widehat{Y} = PY - B$$

Some capital is omitted from the measured stock \hat{K}

The corresponding investment B is treated as intermediate purchases in GDP

$A4 \implies$ Capital growth might be mismeasured:

$$\frac{\widehat{dK}}{K} \geq \frac{dK}{K}$$

A4 \implies GDP growth might be mismeasured:

$$\frac{\widehat{dY}}{Y} = \frac{dY}{Y} + \left(\frac{1}{b} - 1\right) \left(\frac{dY}{Y} - \frac{d\tilde{B}}{\tilde{B}}\right) \qquad \tilde{B} \equiv \left(\frac{B}{P}\right) \left(\frac{P}{\tilde{P}}\right)^{\frac{b}{1-b}}$$

$$\frac{b}{\tilde{B}} = \frac{\hat{P}\hat{Y}}{PY} \le 1$$

A4
$$\implies \hat{s}_L \text{ over-estimates } \epsilon_L$$
:

$$\hat{s}_L = \frac{WL}{\hat{p}\hat{Y}} = \frac{WL}{PY}\frac{PY}{\hat{p}\hat{Y}} = \frac{\epsilon_L}{b} > \epsilon_L$$

Result 2:

But :

$$\frac{\widehat{dZ}}{Z} - \frac{dZ}{Z} \equiv \Delta = \Delta^{(1)} + \Delta^{(2)} + \Delta^{(3)}$$

$$\Delta^{(1)} = \left(\frac{1}{b} - 1\right) \left(\frac{dY}{Y} - \frac{d\tilde{B}}{\tilde{B}}\right) \qquad (\text{GDP growth bias}) \geq 0$$

$$\Delta^{(2)} = \widehat{s}_L \left(1 - b\right) \left(\frac{\widehat{dK}}{K} - \frac{dL}{L}\right) \qquad (\text{labor share bias}) > 0$$

$$\Delta^{(3)} = \left(1 - \epsilon_L\right) \left(\frac{dK}{K} - \frac{\widehat{dK}}{K}\right) \qquad (\text{capital growth bias}) \geq 0$$

 $\hat{s}_L = rac{\epsilon_L}{b}$ should be high/growing

Measurement bias from intangibles+markups

Result 3:

$$\frac{\widehat{dZ}}{Z} - \frac{dZ}{Z} \equiv \Delta = \Delta^{(1)} + \Delta^{(2)} + \Delta^{(3)}$$

$$\Delta^{(1)} = \left(\frac{1}{b} - 1\right) \left(\frac{dY}{Y} - \frac{d\tilde{B}}{\tilde{B}}\right) \qquad \text{(GDP growth bias)} \geq 0$$

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$$\Delta^{(3)} = \left(1 - \epsilon_L\right) \left(\frac{dK}{K} - \frac{\widehat{dK}}{K}\right) \qquad \text{(capital growth bias)} \geq 0$$

<u>And</u>: $\hat{s}_L = \frac{\epsilon_L}{b\mu}$ could be low/falling

$$U = \int_0^{+\infty} e^{-\rho t} \frac{C_t^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} dt$$

$$Y_t = Z_t K_t^{\alpha} L_t^{1-\alpha}, \quad \frac{dL_t}{L_t} = g_L dt, \quad \frac{dZ_t}{Z_t} = g_Z dt$$

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$$K_t = K_{1,t}^{1-\eta} K_{2,t}^{\eta}, \quad \frac{dQ_{n,t}}{Q_{n,t}} = g_{Q_n} dt \quad n = 1, 2$$

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negative when $g_{Q_2} > g_{Q_1}$ and $b < 1$

3. $\Delta^{(3)} =$ labor share bias still has an ambiguous sign ...

... but (generally) negative when $g_{Q_2} > g_{Q_1}$, b < 1, and $\mu > 1$

Derivations

2. Data

Methodology

Given estimates of \hat{b} and \hat{g}_{Q_2} , and $\{\hat{g}, \hat{g}_K, \hat{g}_L, \hat{s}_L\}$, construct:

$$\eta = \frac{1-b}{\hat{b}\hat{s}_L} \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha} \frac{\hat{r}+\delta_2-\hat{g}_{Q_2}}{\hat{g}+\delta_2-\hat{g}_{Q_2}}$$

$$g_Z = \hat{g} - (1-\alpha)\hat{g}_L - \alpha\hat{g}_K + \alpha\eta(\hat{g}_{Q_2} - (\hat{g}-\hat{g}_K)) \qquad \text{[adjusted Solow residual]}$$

$$\mu = \frac{1-\alpha}{\hat{b}\hat{s}_L}$$

Data on \hat{b}

Commodity Use tables, 1997-2018: 61 different commodities and services.

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10 largest GDP adjustments \hat{b}_j

	\hat{b}_j	$\hat{g}_{Q_2,j}$ (%)
Services		
Professional, scientific, and technical services	0.940	0.49
Other real estate	0.952	-1.85
Administrative and support services	0.964	0.10
Insurance carriers and related activities	0.972	-0.31
Credit intermediation and related activities	0.973	0.96
Management of companies and enterprises	0.974	1.44
Commodities		
Chemical products	0.962	1.21
Oil and gas extraction	0.972	1.99
Petroleum and coal products	0.973	3.68
Food and beverage and tobacco products	0.976	1.02

Investment in organization capital, misclassified as intermediates?

Adjusted Solow residual g_{Zi} (%)



Cumulative GDP adjustments for business service sector

	Average, 1997-2018		
Service groups	\hat{b}	$g_{Q_2}(\%)$	
Prof. services	0.94	0.49	
Prof. services + Manag.	0.92	0.68	
Prof. services + Manag. + Admin.	0.89	0.55	



Total adjustment to TFP growth

	\hat{b}	\hat{g}_{Q_2} (%)	g_{Z} (%)	μ	η
1947-1996	0	0	1.36	1.00	0
1997-2018					
No adj., no markups	0	0	0.86	1.00	0
No adj., markups	0	0	0.95	1.06	0
Adj. for Prof. services	0.94	0.49	1.04	1.13	0.25
Adj. for Prof. services + Manag.	0.92	0.68	1.10	1.15	0.35
Adj. for Prof. services + Manag. + Admin.	0.89	0.55	1.14	1.19	0.50

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 $\Delta g_Z = -22$ bps (adjusted) vs. $\Delta g_Z = -50$ bps (unadjusted)

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Upper bound on g_{Q_2}



Adj. for Organization capital (Compustat)

Pre- vs. post-1997

Previous analysis assumes no adjustments needed before 1997. Reasonable?

Apply adjustments to 47-96, and compare to 97-18. Problems:

- 1. Expenditure data (\hat{b}_j) :
 - 47-96 service and commodity groups **coarser** than 97-18.
 - "Administrative and Waste Management Services" \supset "Administrative and Support Services"
 - use higher 47-96 aggregation level \rightarrow mechanically lower \hat{b}_j

2. Price data $(\hat{g}_{Q_2,j})$:

- no deflators in GDP-by-industry tables pre-97; no source for service prices
- use post-97 values as baseline

Pre vs. post-97: Cumulative GDP adjustment

 \hat{b} (average)

	1947-1996	1997-2018	$\Delta \hat{b}$	<i>t</i> -stat
Prof. services	0.955	0.921	-0.033***	-15.40
Prof. services + Manag.	0.937	0.899	-0.038***	-18.11
Prof. services + Manag. + Admin.	0.924	0.866	-0.057^{***}	-16.23

*: p < 0.05, **: p < 0.01, ***: p < 0.001.

No change in \hat{b} for the average commodity/service group

Detailed commodity/service groups



Pre vs. post-97: results

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	1997-2018	1947-1996	
	<i>B</i> Z (%)	g_{Z} (%)	Δg_Z (%)
No markups, no intan adjustment	0.86	1.36	-0.50
Markups, adjustment for Prof. serv.+Manag.+Admin.	1.18	1.43	-0.25

Detailed results
Robustness

Are the magnitudes for \hat{b} reasonable?

- · Compustat expenditures on organization capital
- $\hat{b} = 0.91$, vs. 0.89 in Use tables
- · Similar adjustment to $\widehat{dZ/Z}$

Are the magnitudes for \hat{g}_{O_2} reasonable?

- · Price data from BLS, 97-18
- $\cdot \ \hat{g}_{Q_2} > \hat{g}_{Q_1}$
- · Smaller adjustment (20bps instead of 28bps)

Are the results robust to alternative values of other parameters?

- · lower δ_2 slightly magnifies the mismeasurement; $\delta_2 = 0.05 \rightarrow 30$ bps adjustment
- $\cdot~$ higher α slightly weakens the mismeasurement; $\alpha = 0.36 \rightarrow$ 27bps adjustment

Compustat validation

Alternative parameter values

BLS validation

Conclusion

Since late 90s, $\widehat{dZ/Z}$ has been declining

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 \cdot 40-60% due to measurement bias, driven by omitted intangibles + markups

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 \cdot open questions

bias off balanced-growth path

other proxies for g_{Q_2}

More

Reclassifying intermediate expenditures as intangibles

Are the magnitudes for *b* reasonable?

- + all service purchases treated as investment
- only externally purchased intangibles no internally generated

Compare to magnitudes obtained using firm accounting data

empirical proxy for investment in org cap (Eisfeldt and Papanikolaou, 2013)

externally purchased + internally generated

Validation with Compustat

Compustat, 1997-2018, mapped to the 61 sectors *s* in the IO tables.

For each sector *s*,

$$egin{array}{rcl} M_s &=& 0.3 imes (ext{xsga}_s - ext{xrd}_s) \ Y_s &=& ext{Adjusted value added} = \hat{Y}_s + M_s \end{array}$$

$$\hat{Y}_s$$
 = Measured value added
= EBITDA_s + xrd_s + Wages_s

Aggregating:

$$b \equiv \frac{\sum_{s} \hat{Y}_{s}}{\sum_{s} \hat{Y}_{s} + M_{s}} = \frac{\text{Unadjusted GDP}}{\text{Adjusted GDP}}$$

<u>Note</u> : Wages_s estimated using the IO Use tables





Compustat comparison

	\hat{b}	\hat{g}_{Q_2} (%)	<i>g</i> _Z (%)	μ	η
1947-1996	0	0	1.36	1.00	0
1997-2018					
No adjustment, no markups	0	0	0.86	1.00	0
No adjustment, markups	0	0	0.95	1.06	0
Adjusted for Prof. services	0.94	0.49	1.04	1.13	0.25
Adjusted for Prof. services + Manag.	0.92	0.68	1.10	1.15	0.35
Adjusted for Prof. services + Manag. + Admin.	0.89	0.55	1.14	1.19	0.50
Adjusted for Organization capital (Compustat)	0.91	0.68	1.11	1.16	0.38



- IO tables, unadj.
- · IO tables, adj. for Prof. services
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- · IO tables, adj. for Prof. services + Management + Admin.

- Compustat, unadj.
- Compustat, adj. for Organization capital

How large can the bias potentially be?

Given (η, g_{Q_2}) , match post-97 moments:

$$\hat{g} = \frac{\widehat{dY}}{Y}, \quad \hat{g}_L = \frac{\widehat{dL}}{L}, \quad \hat{g} - g_{Q_1} = \hat{g}_K = \frac{\widehat{dK}}{K}, \quad \hat{s}_L.$$

Compute and plot implied values of:

$$g_{Z} = \hat{g} - (1 - \alpha)\hat{g}_{L} - \alpha\hat{g}_{K} + \alpha\eta(g_{Q_{2}} - g_{Q_{1}})$$

$$\mu = \frac{1 - \alpha}{\hat{s}_{L}} + \alpha\eta\frac{g + \delta_{2} - g_{Q_{2}}}{r + \delta_{2} - g_{Q_{2}}}$$

$$b = \frac{1}{1 + \alpha\eta\frac{\hat{s}_{L}}{1 - \alpha}\frac{\hat{g} + \delta_{2} - g_{Q_{2}}}{\hat{r} + \delta_{2} - g_{Q_{2}}}}$$

Implied moments for $\alpha = 0.32$



back

An alternative source for ommitted capital prices

Producer Price Indices, BLS, 1997-2018.

Industry classification does not exactly match IO tables

substantially more detail for certain commodities (e.g. consumer products)

missing commodities/services (e.g. Management of Companies)

Matching commodities/services, corr. w/ IO tables deflators is high but not perfect



Commodities or services with the largest GDP adjustments, 1997-2018 $\hat{b} = g_{Q_2}$ (VA) g_{Q_2} (GO) g_{Q_3} (BLS)

· ·	
Services	
Derviceb	

Professional, scientific, and technical services	0.940	0.005	0.003	0.002
Other real estate	0.952	-0.019	-0.004	n.a.
Administrative and support services	0.964	0.001	0.001	-0.003
Insurance carriers and related activities	0.972	-0.003	-0.003	0.003
Credit intermediation and related activities	0.973	0.010	0.008	-0.016
Management of companies and enterprises	0.974	0.014	0.007	n.a.
Commodities				
Chemical products	0.962	0.012	0.012	0.013
Oil and gas extraction	0.972	0.020	0.016	0.014
Petroleum and coal products	0.973	0.037	0.034	0.034
Food and beverage and tobacco products	0.976	0.010	0.004	0.004

Implied moments for the different price indices

	GDP t	ables, 1	BEA	PPI, BLS		
	g_{Z} (%)	μ	η	g_{Z} (%)	μ	η
1947-1996	1.36	1.00	0	1.36	1.00	0
1997-2018						
No adjustment, no markups	0.86	1.00	0	0.86	1.00	0
No adjustment, markups	0.95	1.06	0	0.95	1.06	0
Adjusted for Prof. services	1.04	1.13	0.25	1.02	1.13	0.25
Adjusted for Prof. services + Admin.	1.08	1.17	0.40	1.04	1.17	0.40
Adjusted for Org. capital (Compustat)	1.08	1.16	0.38	1.04	1.16	0.38

Price deflators in the IO tables vs. BLS PPI deflators

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
$g_{Q_2}^{(BLS)}$	0.97***	0.97***	1.04^{***}	1.05***
	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Commodity/service FE	no	yes	no	yes
Year FE	no	no	yes	yes
Clustering of s.e.	commodity + year	commodity + year	commodity + year	commodity + year
R^2	0.603	0.633	0.643	0.673
Ν	829	829	829	829

Implied moments for $\alpha = 0.36$



back

Implied TFP growth for alternative values of δ_2



Approach 1: methodology and data

Methodology : for intan investment *B* misclassified as intermediates:

1. Compute
$$\hat{b} = \frac{\text{Unadjusted GDP}}{\text{Adjusted GDP}} = \frac{\hat{P}\hat{Y}}{\hat{P}\hat{Y} + B}$$

2. From model, obtain g_{Q_2} such that:

Solution for g_{Q_2}

$$b = \hat{b}$$

 $g_Z = \text{pre-97 measured TFP growth} = 1.36\%$
 $\hat{g}_Z = \text{post-97 measured TFP growth} = 0.86\%$

Data : Commodity Use tables, 1997-2018: 61 different commodities and services.

 $B_j = \text{total intermediate use of commodity/service } j \rightarrow \hat{b}_j$

Approach 1: 10 largest GDP adjustments

 \hat{b}_{j} (average, 1997-2018)

Service	28		
Profess	sional, scientific, and technical services	0.940	
Other	real estate	0.952	
Admir	nistrative and support services	0.964	
Insura	nce carriers and related activities	0.972	
Credit	intermediation and related activities	0.973	
Manag	gement of companies and enterprises	0.974	
Comm	odities		
<u> </u>			
Chemi	cal products	0.962	
Oil and	cal products d gas extraction	0.962 0.972	
Oil and Petrole	cal products d gas extraction eum and coal products	0.962 0.972 0.973	
Oil and Petrole Food a	cal products d gas extraction eum and coal products nd beverage and tobacco products	0.962 0.972 0.973 0.976	

Approach 1: results

	Average, 1997-2018
Service groups	- Û
Prof. services	0.94
Prof. services + Manag.	0.92
Prof. services + Manag. + Admin.	0.89





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Approach 1: results

	Average, 1997-2018					
Service groups	\hat{b}	$g_{Q_2}(\%)$	η	μ		
Prof. services	0.94	2.50	0.26	1.13		
Prof. services + Manag.	0.92	1.58	0.36	1.18		
Prof. services + Manag. + Admin.	0.89	0.93	0.50	1.19		



Approach 1: solution for g_{Q_2}

The unique price growth satisfying these conditions is given by:

$$g_{Q_2} = \frac{1}{2} \left(r + \delta_2 + \hat{g} - \hat{g}_K + \hat{\xi} - \sqrt{\left(\hat{\xi} + (\hat{r} - \hat{g} - (\hat{g}_K + \delta_2))\right)^2 + 4(\hat{r} - \hat{g})(\hat{g}_K + \delta_2)} \right),$$

$$\hat{\xi} = \frac{\hat{s}_L \hat{b}}{\left[g_Z - (\hat{g} - (1 - \alpha)\hat{g}_L - \alpha\hat{g}_K)\right]}$$

$$\hat{\xi} = \frac{s_L b}{(1-\hat{b})(1-\alpha)} \left[g_Z - (\hat{g} - (1-\alpha)\hat{g}_L - \alpha\hat{g}_K) \right].$$

When $\hat{b} = 0$, $g_{Q_2} = \hat{g} - \hat{g}_K = g_{Q_1}$.

back

Pre vs. post-97: 10 largest GDP adjustments

	\hat{b} (average)						
	1947-1996	1997-2018	$\Delta \hat{b}$	<i>t</i> -stat			
Services							
Prof., scient. & techn. services	0.955	0.921	-0.033***	-15.40			
Finance and Insurance	0.957	0.929	-0.028^{***}	-13.72			
Real estate	0.973	0.952	-0.021^{***}	-13.15			
Admin. and waste services	0.984	0.959	-0.025***	-13.84			
Information	0.979	0.967	-0.013^{***}	-9.89			
Management of companies	0.981	0.974	-0.007***	-17.60			
Commodities							
Chemical products	0.966	0.962	-0.004^{***}	-9.89			
Oil and gas extraction	0.978	0.972	-0.007^{**}	-2.78			
Petroleum and coal products	0.980	0.973	-0.007^{***}	-3.48			
Food, beverage, tobacco	0.956	0.976	0.020***	6.07			
All commodities and services	0.982	0.983	0.001	1.25			
* : <i>p</i> < 0.05, ** : <i>p</i> < 0.01, *	* * : p < 0.0	01.					

Pre vs. post-97: detailed results

		1997-2	2018			1947-1	996		
	ÂQ2 (%)	gz (%)	μ	η	\hat{g}_{Q_2} (%)	gz (%)	μ	η	Δg_Z (%)
No adj., no markups	0	0.86	1.00	0	0	1.36	1.00	0.00	-0.50
No adj., markups	0	0.95	1.06	0	0	1.36	1.00	0.00	-0.41
Prof. serv.	0.49	1.07	1.15	0.33	0.49	1.40	1.05	0.17	-0.33
Prof. serv.+Manag.	0.68	1.14	1.18	0.44	0.68	1.43	1.07	0.25	-0.30
Prof. serv.+Manag.+Admin.	0.55	1.18	1.22	0.60	0.55	1.43	1.08	0.30	-0.25

 $\Delta g_Z = 1.18 - 1.43 = -25$ bps (adj.) vs. $\Delta g_Z = 0.86 - 1.36 = -50$ bps (unadj.)