Chapter Objective:

This chapter provides a way to measure economic exposure, discusses its determinants, and presents methods for managing and hedging economic exposure.
Chapter Outline

- Three Types of Exposure
  - Economic vs. Transaction vs. Translation

- Economic Exposure:
  - Measurement
  - Management

- Operating Exposure:
  - Definition & Illustration
  - Determinants
  - Management

Three Types of Exposure

- Economic
  - vs. Transaction
    - vs. Translation
Three Types of Exposure

- **Economic Exposure**
  - Exchange risk as applied to the firm’s competitive position. The subject of this Chapter (#9).

- **Transaction Exposure**
  - Exchange rate risk as applied to the firm’s home currency cash flows. The subject of Chapter 8.

- **Translation Exposure** *(NOT Exam Material)*
  - Exchange rate risk as applied to the firm’s consolidated financial statements. The subject of Chapter 10.

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1. Economic Exposure

- Exchange rate *risk* as applied to the firm’s competitive position.

- Any anticipated changes in the exchange rates would have been already discounted and reflected in the firm’s value.

- Economic exposure can be defined as the extent to which the value of the firm would be affected by *unanticipated* changes in exchange rates.
Economic Exposure (continued)

- Changes in exchange rates can affect
  - firms directly engaged in international trade
  - purely domestic firms*

* Examples
  - US bike manufacturer who sources/sells only in the USA
    - Since the firm’s product competes against imported bicycles
      → it is subject to foreign exchange exposure.
  - High-end ski slope operator in the Alps
    - Even if the clientele is overwhelmingly from the EU, most of those customers will cross-shop with the Rockies or Andes.

2. Transaction Exposure

- This is the subject of Chapter 8.
- Definition
  - sensitivity of the “realized” domestic currency values of a firm’s contractual cash flows denominated in foreign currencies
  - to unexpected exchange rate changes.
- Transaction exposure arises from fixed-price contracting in a world of constantly changing exchange rates.
Translation Exposure
(Not Exam Material)

- The subject of Chapter 10.
- Definition
  - Exchange rate risk as applied to the firm’s consolidated financial statements.
    - Consolidation involves translation of subsidiaries’ financial statements from local currencies to home currency.
- Involves many controversial issues.

3. Economic Exposure
How to Measure Economic Exposure

- Economic exposure is the sensitivity
  - of (i) the future home currency value of the firm’s assets and liabilities and (ii) its operating cash flow
  - to random changes in exchange rates
- Investor’s perspective: Sensitivity of the future home-currency values of the firm’s assets and liabilities to random changes in exchange rates
  - Statistical measurement: regressions of stock price on FX rate
- Manager’s perspective: Sensitivity of firm’s operating cash flows to random changes in exchange rates
  - Hard to measure: sales are endogenous ➔ regressions ill advised

Channels of Economic Exposure

- Asset exposure
- Home currency value of assets and liabilities
  - Exchange rate fluctuations
  - Operating exposure
- Future operating cash flows
- Firm Value
3a. Asset Exposure

(3a is NOT Exam Material)

How to Measure Economic (Asset) Exposure

• If a U.S. MNC were to run a regression on the dollar value \( P \) of its British assets on the dollar pound exchange rate, \( S(\$/\£) \), the regression would be of the form:

\[
P = a + b \times S + e
\]

Where

\( a \) is the regression constant
\( e \) is the random error term with mean zero.

The regression coefficient \( b \) measures the sensitivity of the dollar value of the assets \( P \) to the exchange rate, \( S \).
How to Measure Economic (Asset) Exposure

The exposure coefficient, \( b \), is defined as follows:

\[
b = \frac{\text{Cov}(P,S)}{\text{Var}(S)}
\]

Where \( \text{Cov}(P,S) \) is the covariance between the dollar value of the asset and the exchange rate, and \( \text{Var}(S) \) is the variance of the exchange rate.

How to Measure Economic (Asset) Exposure

- The exposure coefficient shows that there are two sources of economic exposure:
  1. the variance of the exchange rate and
  2. the covariance between the dollar value of the asset and exchange rate

\[
b = \frac{\text{Cov}(P,S)}{\text{Var}(S)}
\]
How to Measure Economic (Asset) Exposure

- Technical issues with the regression analysis
  
  *(NOT Exam Material)*

  - Endogeneity problem?
  
  - Non-stationarity of the stock price & FX time series?
    - Levels vs. differences
  
  - Time-varying variance?
    - (G)ARCH modeling?

Asset Exposure: A Simple Example

- Suppose a U.S. firm has an asset in Britain whose local currency price is random

- For simplicity, suppose there are only three states of the world & each state is equally likely to occur

- Finally, suppose that (1) the future local currency price of this British asset, say $P^*$, and (2) the future exchange rate, say $S$, will be determined depending on the realized state of the world
Example (continued)

- In case one, the local currency price of the asset and the exchange rate are positively correlated.
  - This gives rise to substantial exchange rate risk.
  - Example? Cartier?

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<th>$P^*$</th>
<th>$S$</th>
<th>$S\times P^*$</th>
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Example (continued)

In case two, the local currency price of the asset and the exchange rate are **negatively** correlated.  
- This ameliorates (i.e., reduces) the exchange rate risk substantially – completely, in this example.  
- Example?

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Example (continued)

In case three, the local currency price of the asset is fixed at £1,000  
- This “contractual” exposure can be completely hedged.  
- Realistic? *Electric utility? Health Care?*

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3b. Operating Exposure

(Back to Exam Material)

Operating Exposure: Definition

- The effect of random changes in exchange rates on the firm’s competitive position, which is not readily measurable.
- A good definition of operating exposure is the extent to which the firm’s operating cash flows are affected by the exchange rate.
How to Measure Economic (Operating) Exposure

- Should we use regression analysis?
  - Endogeneity
    - Sales are a key decision variable of managers
- From the manager’s perspective, what matters?
  - Changes in the competitive position relative to foreign competitors
  - We know how to measure this: RER (“relative PPP”)

Economic (Operating) Exposure and Real Exchange Rate

The real exchange rate index is

\[ q^* = \frac{s_{t+T}'}{s_t'} \]

If PPP holds, then \( s_{t+T}' = s_t' \) so \( q^* = 1 \).

- \( q^* < 1 \) \( \rightarrow \) foreign country’s competitiveness improves (and U.S. competitive position worsens);
- \( q^* > 1 \) \( \rightarrow \) foreign country’s competitiveness worsens (and U.S. competitiveness improves).
Determinants of Operating Exposure

- Recall that operating exposure cannot be readily determined from the firm’s accounting statements as can transaction exposure.
- The firm’s operating exposure is determined by:
  - The market structure of inputs and products: how competitive or how monopolistic the firm’s markets are
    - Example: Latest export statistics for the Eurozone
  - The firm’s ability to adjust its markets, product mix, and sourcing in response to exchange rate changes.

Managing Operating Exposure

- (i) Selecting Low Cost Production Sites
- (ii) Flexible Sourcing Policy
- (iii) Diversification of the Market
- (iv) R&D and Product Differentiation
- (v) Financial Hedging
(i) Low-Cost Production Sites

- A firm may wish to diversify the location of their production sites to mitigate the effect of exchange rate movements.
  - *e.g.* Honda built North American factories in (partial) response to a strong yen, but later found itself importing more cars from Japan due to a weak yen.
  - Danger of losing economies of scale from too many production sites.

(ii) Flexible Sourcing Policy

- Sourcing does not apply only to components, but also to “guest workers”.
  - *e.g.* Japan Air Lines hired foreign crews to remain competitive in international routes in the face of a strong yen, but later contemplated a reverse strategy in the face of a weak yen and rising domestic unemployment.
(iii) Diversification of the Market

- Selling in multiple markets to take advantage of economies of scale and diversification of exchange rate risk.

(iv) R&D and Product Differentiation

- Successful R&D that allows for
  - cost cutting
  - enhanced productivity
  - product differentiation.
- Successful product differentiation gives the firm less elastic demand—which may translate into less exchange rate risk.
(v) Financial Hedging

- The goal is to stabilize the firm’s cash flows in the near term.
- Financial Hedging is distinct from operational hedging.
- Financial Hedging involves use of derivative securities such as currency swaps, futures, forwards, currency options, among others.

End Chapter Nine