Monetary Policy & Anchored Expectations An Endogenous Gain Learning Model

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Inflation that runs below its desired level can lead to an unwelcome fall in longer-term inflation expectations, which, in turn, can pull actual inflation even lower, resulting in an adverse cycle of ever-lower inflation and inflation expectations. [...] Well-anchored inflation expectations are critical[.]

Jerome Powell, Chairman of the Federal Reserve ¹ (Emphases added.)

¹"New Economic Challenges and the Fed's Monetary Policy Review," August 27, 2020.

This paper

 How to conduct monetary policy when expectations can become unanchored?

- Estimate how unanchoring takes place in data

 → quantify novel anchoring channel

Preview of results

- 1. Estimation
 - Expectations process is nonlinear

- 2. Optimal policy
 - Responds aggressively to inflation when unanchored, accommodates inflation when anchored

- 3. Taylor rule
 - Less aggressive on inflation than under rational expectations

Related literature

 Optimal monetary policy in the New Keynesian model Clarida, Gali & Gertler (1999), Woodford (2003)

• Adaptive learning

Evans & Honkapohja (2001, 2006), Sargent (1999), Primiceri (2006), Lubik & Matthes (2018), Bullard & Mitra (2002), Preston (2005, 2008), Ferrero (2007), Molnár & Santoro (2014), Mele et al (2019), Eusepi & Preston (2011), Milani (2007, 2014), Marcet & Nicolini (2003), Eusepi, Giannoni & Preston (2018)

• Anchoring and the Phillips curve

Goodfriend (1993), Svensson (2015), Hooper et al (2019), Afrouzi & Yang (2020), Reis (2020), Hebden et al (2020), Jørgensen & Lansing (2019), Gobbi et al (2019), Carvalho et al (2019)

Structure of talk

- 1. Model of anchoring expectations
- 2. Quantification of learning channel
- 3. Solving the Ramsey problem
- 4. Implementing optimal policy
- 5. Approximating optimal policy with a Taylor rule

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Households: standard up to $\hat{\mathbb{E}}$

Maximize lifetime expected utility

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_t^i \sum_{T=t}^{\infty} \beta^{T-t} \left[U(C_T^i) - \int_0^1 v(h_T^i(j)) dj \right]$$
 (1)

Budget constraint

$$B_t^i \le (1 + i_{t-1})B_{t-1}^i + \int_0^1 w_t(j)h_t^i(j)dj + \Pi_t^i(j)dj - T_t - P_tC_t^i$$
 (2)

▶ Consumption, price level

Firms: standard up to $\hat{\mathbb{E}}$

Maximize present value of profits

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_{t}^{j} \sum_{T=t}^{\infty} \alpha^{T-t} Q_{t,T} \left[\Pi_{t}^{j}(p_{t}(j)) \right]$$
(3)

subject to demand

$$y_t(j) = Y_t \left(\frac{p_t(j)}{P_t}\right)^{-\theta} \tag{4}$$

▶ Profits, stochastic discount factor

Expectations: $\hat{\mathbb{E}}$ instead of \mathbb{E}

• Model implies mapping between exogenous states s_t and observables $y_t \equiv (\pi_t, x_t, i_t)'$

$$y_t = gs_t \tag{5}$$

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Under rational expectations (RE), private sector knows model

 → knows (5)

$$\mathbb{E}_t \, y_{t+1} = g \, \mathbb{E}_t \, s_{t+1} \tag{6}$$

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• $\hat{\mathbb{E}}$: agents do not internalize that identical \to do not know aggregate model \to do not know (5)

• Agents know evolution of exogenous states

$$s_{t+1} = hs_t + \epsilon_{t+1}$$
 $\epsilon_t \sim \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{0}, \Sigma)$ (7)

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• Postulate linear functional relationship instead of (5):

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_t y_{t+1} = \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \begin{pmatrix} \pi_{t+1} \\ x_{t+1} \\ i_{t+1} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \overline{\pi}_t \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} + ghs_t$$
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 $\bar{\pi}_t \rightarrow$ concept of long-run inflation expectations in the model

• Agents estimate $\bar{\pi}_t$ using observed states and knowledge of (7)

Updating $\bar{\pi}$

Let b_1 denote first row of gh.

One-period ahead inflation forecast:

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_{t-1}\pi_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + b_1 s_{t-1} \tag{9}$$

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One-period ahead inflation forecast error:

$$f_{t|t-1} = \pi_t - (\bar{\pi}_{t-1} + b_1 s_{t-1}) \tag{10}$$

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→ Update for long-run inflation expectations:

$$\bar{\pi}_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + k_t f_{t|t-1} \tag{11}$$

 $k_t \in (0,1)$ learning gain



1. Decreasing gain:

$$\bar{\pi}_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + \frac{1}{t} f_{t|t-1} \tag{12}$$

2. Constant gain:

$$\bar{\pi}_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + k f_{t|t-1} \tag{13}$$

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$$\bar{\pi}_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + \mathbf{g}(f_{t|t-1}) f_{t|t-1}$$
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Marcet & Nicolini 2003, Carvalho et al 2019 Optimal monetary policy: -



Model summary

• New Keynesian core: IS and Phillips curves

$$x_{t} = -\sigma i_{t} + \hat{\mathbb{E}}_{t} \sum_{T=t}^{\infty} \beta^{T-t} \left((1-\beta) x_{T+1} - \sigma(\beta i_{T+1} - \pi_{T+1}) + \sigma r_{T}^{n} \right)$$
 (15)

$$\pi_t = \kappa x_t + \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \sum_{T=t}^{\infty} (\alpha \beta)^{T-t} \left(\kappa \alpha \beta x_{T+1} + (1-\alpha) \beta \pi_{T+1} + u_T \right)$$
 (16)

▶ Derivations ▶ Actual laws of motion

Observables: $y_t = (\pi, x, i)'$ inflation, output gap, interest rate Exogenous states: $s_t = (r_t^n, u_t)'$ natural rate and cost-push shock

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• Expectations:

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \pi_{t+1} = \bar{\pi}_t + b_1 s_t \tag{17}$$

$$\bar{\pi}_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + \mathbf{g}(f_{t|t-1}) f_{t|t-1}$$
 (18)

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Estimating form of gain function

- Calibrate parameters of New Keynesian core to literature
- Estimate flexible form of expectations process via simulated method of moments (Duffie & Singleton 1990, Lee & Ingram 1991, Smith 1993)

$$\bar{\pi}_t = \bar{\pi}_{t-1} + \mathbf{g}(f_{t|t-1}) f_{t|t-1}$$
 (18)

• Moments: autocovariances of inflation, output gap, federal funds rate and 1-year ahead Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF) inflation expectations at lags $0,\ldots,4$



Calibration - parameters from the literature

β	0.98	stochastic discount factor
σ	1	intertemporal elasticity of substitution
α	0.5	Calvo probability of not adjusting prices
κ	0.0842	slope of the Phillips curve
ψ_{π}	1.5	coefficient of inflation in Taylor rule
ψ_x	0.3	coefficient of the output gap in Taylor rule
σ_r	0.01	standard deviation, natural rate shock
σ_i	0.01	standard deviation, monetary policy shock
σ_u	0.5	standard deviation, cost-push shock
Ē	0.145	initial value of the gain
		·

Chari et al 2000, Woodford 2003, Nakamura & Steinsson 2008 Carvalho et al 2019

Estimated expectations process

$$\bar{\pi}_t - \bar{\pi}_{t-1} = \mathbf{g}(f_{t|t-1}) f_{t|t-1}$$
 (18)

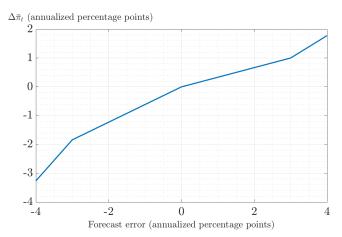


Figure: Changes in long-run inflation expectations as a function of forecast errors

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Ramsey problem

$$\min_{\{y_t, \bar{\pi}_{t-1}, k_t\}_{t=t_0}^{\infty}} \mathbb{E}_{t_0} \sum_{t=t_0}^{\infty} \beta^{t-t_0} (\pi_t^2 + \lambda_x x_t^2)$$

- s.t. model equations
- s.t. evolution of expectations

- \mathbb{E} is the central bank's (CB) expectation
- Assumption: CB observes private expectations and knows the model

Target criterion

Proposition

Monetary policy optimally brings about the following target relationship between inflation and the output gap

$$\pi_t = -\frac{\lambda_x}{\kappa} x_t$$

RE (discretion): move π_t and x_t to offset cost-push shocks

Target criterion

Proposition

Monetary policy optimally brings about the following target relationship between inflation and the output gap

$$\pi_t - \Gamma k \mathbb{E}_t \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} x_{t+i} (1-k)^i = -\frac{\lambda_x}{\kappa} x_t$$

Adaptive learning (exogenous gain): can move $\mathbb{E}_t x_{t+i}$ too if k > 0, where $\Gamma = \frac{\lambda_x}{\kappa} \frac{(1-\alpha)\beta}{1-\alpha\beta}$.

Target criterion

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Monetary policy optimally brings about the following target relationship between inflation and the output gap

$$\pi_t - \Gamma\left(k_t + f_{t|t-1}\mathbf{g}_{\pi,t}\right) \left(\mathbb{E}_t \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} x_{t+i} \prod_{j=0}^{t-1} (1 - k_{t+1+j} - f_{t+1+j|t+j}\mathbf{g}_{\pi,t+j})\right) = -\frac{\lambda_x}{\kappa} x_t$$

Endogenous gain: ability to move $\mathbb{E}_t x_{t+i}$ depends on present and future degree of unanchoring, where $\mathbf{g}_{z,t} \equiv \frac{\partial \mathbf{g}}{\partial z}$ at t.



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Numerical solution procedure

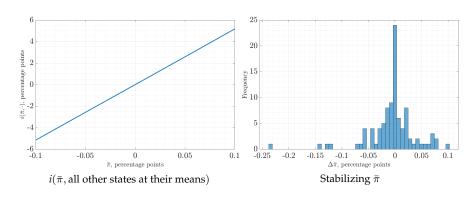
Solve system of model equations + target criterion

For calibrated model with $\lambda_x = 0.05$ (Rotemberg & Woodford 1997),

 \hookrightarrow solve using parameterized expectations algorithm

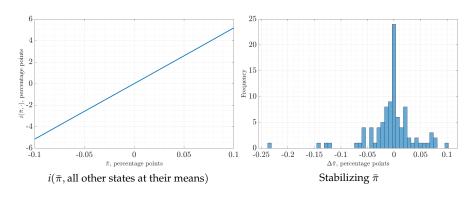
 \hookrightarrow obtain a cubic spline approximation to optimal policy function

Optimal policy - responding to unanchoring



5 bp movement in $\bar{\pi} \rightarrow$ 250 bp movement in i

Optimal policy - responding to unanchoring



5 bp movement in $\bar{\pi} \rightarrow$ 250 bp movement in *i*

Mode: 0.3 bp movement in $\bar{\pi}$

Unanchoring causes volatility

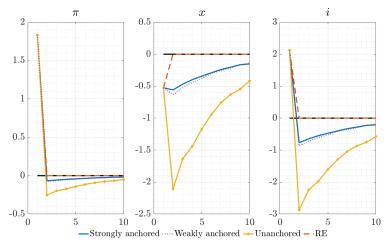


Figure: Impulse responses after a cost-push shock when policy follows a Taylor rule



Volatility comes from endogenous gain

• Constant gain:

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Shocks raise the gain → central bank needs to anchor

... and from positive feedback

IS curve:

$$x_t = -\sigma i_t + \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \sum_{T=t}^{\infty} \beta^{T-t} \left((1-\beta) x_{T+1} - \sigma (\beta i_{T+1} - \pi_{T+1}) + \sigma r_T^n \right)$$

• Unanchored $\to \bar{\pi}$ volatile $\to \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \pi_{T+1}$ volatile

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- $\rightarrow x_t$ volatile

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Optimal Taylor-coefficient on inflation

$$i_t = \psi_\pi \pi_t + \psi_x x_t \tag{19}$$

Optimal Taylor-coefficient on inflation



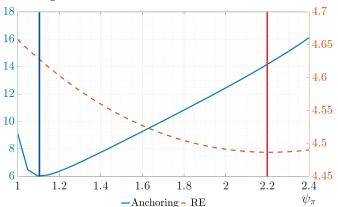
Figure: Central bank loss as a function of ψ_{π}



Optimal Taylor-coefficient on inflation

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Figure: Central bank loss as a function of ψ_{π}



Anchoring-optimal coefficient: $\psi_{\pi}^{A} = 1.1$ RE-optimal coefficient: $\psi_{\pi}^{RE} = 2.2$

Why less aggressive? Future interest rate expectations

IS curve:

$$x_t = -\sigma i_t + \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \sum_{T=t}^{\infty} \beta^{T-t} \left((1-\beta) x_{T+1} - \sigma(\beta i_{T+1} - \pi_{T+1}) + \sigma r_T^n \right)$$

• Current interest rate i_t : one channel of policy



Why less aggressive? Future interest rate expectations

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- Current interest rate *i_t*: one channel of policy
- Taylor rule implies interest rate expectation

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_t i_{t+k} = \psi_\pi \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \pi_{t+k} + \psi_x \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t x_{t+k}$$
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Why less aggressive? Future interest rate expectations

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 (20)

 If private sector understands and believes Taylor rule, expected future interest rates additional channel of policy (Eusepi, Giannoni & Preston 2018)



Conclusion

First theory of monetary policy for potentially unanchored expectations

Estimation of novel unanchoring channel

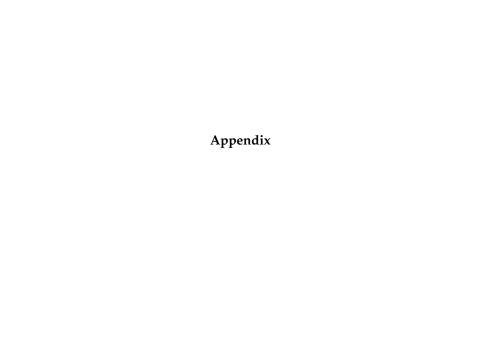
• Expectations process nonlinear

Monetary policy

- Degree of expectations unanchoring determines extent of smoothing shocks
- Key: Optimal policy aggressive when unanchored, accommodates otherwise
- Taylor rule less aggressive than under rational expectations

Future work

- \hookrightarrow How to anchor at zero-lower bound?
- → Other applications: currency crises



Long-run expectations: responsive to short-run conditions?

Individual-level Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF): for 1991-Q4 onward, estimate rolling regression

$$\Delta \bar{\pi}_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1^w f_{t|t-1} + \epsilon_t \tag{21}$$

 $\bar{\pi}_t$ 10-year ahead inflation expectation

 $f_{t|t-1} \equiv \pi_t - \mathbb{E}_{t-1} \, \pi_t$ individual one-year-ahead forecast error w indexes windows of 20 quarters

Time-varying responsiveness

$$\Delta \bar{\pi}_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1^w f_{t|t-1} + \epsilon_t \tag{1}$$



Figure: Time series of $\hat{\beta}_1^w$

Breakeven inflation



Figure: Market-based inflation expectations, various horizons, %



Correcting the TIPS from liquidity risk



Figure: Market-based inflation expectations, 10 year, %



Robustness checks

$$\Delta \bar{\pi}_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1^w \pi_t + \epsilon_t \tag{1}$$



Figure: Time series of $\hat{\beta}_1^w$

Robustness checks - PCE core

$$\Delta \bar{\pi}_t = \beta_0^w + \beta_1^w f_{t|t-1} + \epsilon_t \tag{1}$$

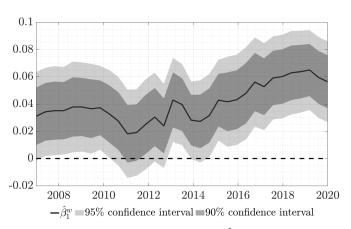


Figure: Time series of $\hat{\beta}_1^w$



Robustness checks - controlling for inflation levels

$$\Delta \bar{\pi}_t = \beta_0^w + \beta_1^w f_{t|t-1} + \beta_2^w \pi_t + \epsilon_t \tag{1}$$



Figure: Time series of $\hat{\beta}_1^w$



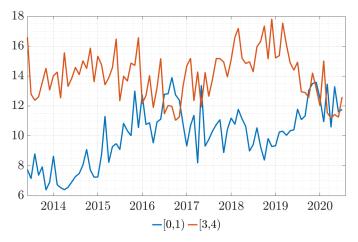
Further evidence: disagreement

Figure: Livingston Survey of Firms: Interquartile range of 10-year ahead inflation expectations





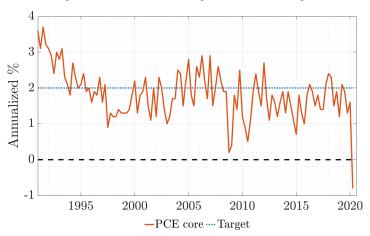
Figure: New York Fed Survey of Consumers: Percent of respondents indicating 3-year ahead inflation will be in a particular range





Further evidence: introspection

Figure: PCE core inflation against the Fed's target





Oscillatory dynamics in adaptive learning

Consider a stylized adaptive learning model in two equations:

$$\pi_t = \beta f_t + u_t \tag{22}$$

$$f_t = f_{t-1} + k(\pi_t - f_{t-1})$$
(23)

Solve for the time series of expectations f_t

$$f_t = \underbrace{\frac{1 - k^{-1}}{1 - k^{-1}\beta}}_{\approx 1} f_{t-1} + \frac{k^{-1}}{1 - k^{-1}\beta} u_t \tag{24}$$

Solve for forecast error $f_t \equiv \pi_t - f_{t-1}$:

$$f_{t} = \underbrace{-\frac{1-\beta}{1-k\beta}}_{\text{lim}_{t-1}=-1} f_{t-1} + \frac{1}{1-k\beta} u_{t}$$
 (25)

Functional forms for g in the literature

• Smooth anchoring function (Gobbi et al, 2019)

$$p = h(y_{t-1}) = A + \frac{BCe^{-Dy_{t-1}}}{(Ce^{-Dy_{t-1}} + 1)^2}$$
 (26)

 $p \equiv Prob(\text{liquidity trap regime})$ y_{t-1} output gap

• Kinked anchoring function (Carvalho et al, 2019)

$$k_t = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{t} & \text{when } \theta_t < \bar{\theta} \\ k & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$
 (27)

 θ_t criterion, $\bar{\theta}$ threshold value



Choices for criterion θ_t

• Carvalho et al. (2019)'s criterion

$$\theta_t^{CEMP} = \max |\Sigma^{-1}(\phi_{t-1} - T(\phi_{t-1}))|$$
 (28)

 Σ variance-covariance matrix of shocks $T(\phi)$ mapping from PLM to ALM

CUSUM-criterion

$$\omega_t = \omega_{t-1} + \kappa k_{t-1} (f_{t|t-1} f'_{t|t-1} - \omega_{t-1})$$
(29)

$$\theta_t^{CUSUM} = \theta_{t-1} + \kappa k_{t-1} (f'_{t|t-1} \omega_t^{-1} f_{t|t-1} - \theta_{t-1})$$
 (30)

 ω_t estimated forecast-error variance



General updating algorithm

$$\phi_t = \left(\phi'_{t-1} + k_t R_t^{-1} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ s_{t-1} \end{bmatrix} \left(y_t - \phi_{t-1} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ s_{t-1} \end{bmatrix} \right)' \right)'$$
(31)

$$R_t = R_{t-1} + k_t \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ s_{t-1} \end{pmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & s_{t-1} \end{bmatrix} - R_{t-1}$$

$$(32)$$



Assumptions on $\mathbf{g}(\cdot)$

$$\mathbf{g}_{ff}\geq 0$$

(33)

 $\mathbf{g}(\cdot)$ convex in forecast errors.



Details on households and firms

Consumption:

$$C_t^i = \left[\int_0^1 c_t^i(j)^{\frac{\theta - 1}{\theta}} dj \right]^{\frac{\sigma}{\theta - 1}}$$
(34)

 $\theta > 1$: elasticity of substitution between varieties

Aggregate price level:

$$P_t = \left[\int_0^1 p_t(j)^{1-\theta} dj \right]^{\frac{1}{\theta-1}}$$
 (35)

Profits:

$$\Pi_t^j = p_t(j)y_t(j) - w_t(j)f^{-1}(y_t(j)/A_t)$$
(36)

Stochastic discount factor

$$Q_{t,T} = \beta^{T-t} \frac{P_t U_c(C_T)}{P_T U_c(C_t)}$$
(37)



Derivations

Household FOCs

$$\hat{C}_{t}^{i} = \hat{\mathbb{E}}_{t}^{i} \hat{C}_{t+1}^{i} - \sigma(\hat{i}_{t} - \hat{\mathbb{E}}_{t}^{i} \hat{\pi}_{t+1})$$
(38)

$$\hat{\mathbb{E}}_t^i \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} \beta^s \hat{C}_t^i = \omega_t^i + \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t^i \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} \beta^s \hat{Y}_t^i$$
(39)

where 'hats' denote log-linear approximation and $\omega_t^i \equiv \frac{(1+i_{t-1})B_{t-1}^i}{P_tY^*}$.

- 1. Solve (38) backward to some date *t*, take expectations at *t*
- 2. Sub in (39)
- 3. Aggregate over households *i*
- \rightarrow Obtain (15)



Actual laws of motion

$$y_{t} = A_{1}f_{a,t} + A_{2}f_{b,t} + A_{3}s_{t}$$

$$s_{t} = hs_{t-1} + \epsilon_{t}$$
(40)

where
$$\langle \pi_t \rangle$$

$$y_t \equiv \begin{pmatrix} \pi_t \\ x_t \\ i_t \end{pmatrix} \qquad s_t \equiv \begin{pmatrix} r_t^n \\ u_t \end{pmatrix} \tag{42}$$

and

$$f_{a,t} \equiv \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \sum_{T-t}^{\infty} (\alpha \beta)^{T-t} y_{T+1} \qquad f_{b,t} \equiv \hat{\mathbb{E}}_t \sum_{T-t}^{\infty} (\beta)^{T-t} y_{T+1}$$
 (43)

Piecewise linear approximation to gain function

$$\mathbf{g}(f_{t|t-1}) = \sum_{i} \gamma_i b_i (f_{t|t-1}) \tag{44}$$

- $b_i(f_{t|t-1})$ = piecewise linear basis
- γ_i = approximating coefficient at node i
- \hookrightarrow Estimate $\hat{\gamma}$ via simulated method of moments



The expectation process over time



Figure: Time series of forecast errors, changes in long-run expectations and gain

Target criterion

Proposition

In the model with anchoring, monetary policy optimally brings about the following target relationship between inflation and the output gap

$$\pi_{t} = -\frac{\lambda_{x}}{\kappa} x_{t}$$

$$+ \frac{\lambda_{x}}{\kappa} \frac{(1 - \alpha)\beta}{1 - \alpha\beta} \left(k_{t} + f_{t|t-1} \mathbf{g}_{\pi,t} \right) \left(\mathbb{E}_{t} \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} x_{t+i} \prod_{j=0}^{i-1} (1 - k_{t+1+j} - f_{t+1+j|t+j} \mathbf{g}_{\bar{\pi},t+j}) \right)$$

where $\mathbf{g}_{z,t} \equiv \frac{\partial \mathbf{g}}{\partial z}$ at t, and b_1 is the first row of b.

Lemma

The discretion and commitment solutions of the Ramsey problem coincide.



Corollary

 $Optimal\ policy\ under\ adaptive\ learning\ is\ time-consistent.$

No commitment - no lagged multipliers

Simplified version of the model: planner chooses $\{\pi_t, x_t, f_t, k_t\}_{t=t_0}^{\infty}$ to minimize

$$\mathcal{L} = \mathbb{E}_{t_0} \sum_{t=t_0}^{\infty} \beta^{t-t_0} \left\{ \pi_t^2 + \lambda x_t^2 + \varphi_{1,t} (\pi_t - \kappa x_t - \beta f_t + u_t) + \varphi_{2,t} (f_t - f_{t-1} - k_t (\pi_t - f_{t-1})) + \varphi_{3,t} (k_t - \mathbf{g}(\pi_t - f_{t-1})) \right\}$$

$$2\pi_t + 2\frac{\lambda}{\kappa}x_t - \varphi_{2,t}(k_t + \mathbf{g}_{\pi}(\pi_t - f_{t-1})) = 0$$
 (45)

$$-2\beta \frac{\lambda}{\kappa} x_t + \varphi_{2,t} - \varphi_{2,t+1} (1 - k_{t+1} - \mathbf{g_f}(\pi_{t+1} - f_t)) = 0$$
 (46)



Target criterion system for anchoring function as changes of the gain

$$\varphi_{6,t} = -cf_{t|t-1}x_{t+1} + \left(1 + \frac{f_{t|t-1}}{f_{t+1|t}}(1 - k_{t+1}) - f_{t|t-1}\mathbf{g}_{\bar{\pi},t}\right)\varphi_{6,t+1} - \frac{f_{t|t-1}}{f_{t+1|t}}(1 - k_{t+1})\varphi_{6,t+2}$$

$$(47)$$

$$0 = 2\pi_t + 2\frac{\lambda_x}{\kappa}x_t - \left(\frac{k_t}{f_{t|t-1}} + \mathbf{g}_{\pi,t}\right)\varphi_{6,t} + \frac{k_t}{f_{t|t-1}}\varphi_{6,t+1}$$

$$\tag{48}$$

 $\varphi_{6,t}$ Lagrange multiplier on anchoring function

The solution to (48) is given by:

$$\varphi_{6,t} = -2 \, \mathbb{E}_t \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} (\pi_{t+i} + \frac{\lambda_x}{\kappa} x_{t+i}) \prod_{j=0}^{i-1} \frac{\frac{k_{t+j}}{f_{t+j|t+j-1}}}{\frac{k_{t+j}}{f_{t+j|t+j-1}} + \mathbf{g}_{\pi,t+j}}$$
(49)



Respond but not too much

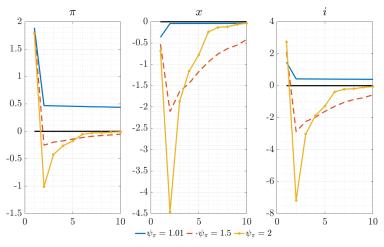


Figure: Impulse responses for unanchored expectations for various values of ψ_π

