

The Role of Free Licences for Cooperation Development and Learning within the Commons-Based Peer Production.

Cases of CC and GNU GPL.

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Structure of the presentation:

- About this paper...
- Commons-Based Peer Production (CBPP) and Free licences: basic ideas;
- Production coherence and the CBPP;
- Free licences and production coherence *within* the CBPP;
- Conclusion: possible directions for future studies.

About the paper: starting points.

- Sphere of interests: *knowledge creation*
- Two important aspects of knowledge creation:
 - *protection and appropriability mechanisms (IPR)*
 - *organisational learning mechanisms (such as norms, rules and routines)*
- No link between these two aspects in economic analysis:
 - ***literature on the IPR***: ignores the process of cooperation development
 - ***knowledge-based approach***: does not pay attention to the role of “formal” framework
- First step: ***to overlook the incentive aspects of licences and to consider their role as coordination mechanisms stimulating learning.***

Commons-Based Peer Production and Free Licences.

- CBPP:
 - Collective creation of common resources;
 - Free cooperation (vs. contract-based);
 - Agents dispersed across time, space and organizational boundaries;
 - Authority (vs. hierarchical methods of command and control).

Ex.: software, music, literature...

- Free Licences:
 - copyright regime,
 - but the renunciation of the right to monopoly rents.

Ex.: GNU GPL, CC, Art Free Licence...

CBPP and Production Coherence.

- CBPP more efficient for the development of knowledge-intensive content, because:
 - creation rather than production process: participants realize themselves through their work;
 - advantages of distributed skills.
- But the CBPP is efficient only if the cooperation is already strong:
 - *Which mechanisms ensure production coherence in the CBPP (the co-ordination of distributed pieces of knowledge and the creation of commonly “shared bodies of knowledge”)?*

Free licences and production coherence *within* the CBPP.

- Debian: operating system, GPL
- Take The Bus: collective music creation, CC
- **GPL and CC licence as one of such coordination mechanisms, because:**

1A. They allow the efficiency of authority (vs. hierarchy):

- *Determine the structuring of leadership and the process of roles' repartition in the projects;*

1B. They permit the establishment of the two-tier organizational structure (vs. clear organizational boundaries):

- *participation of a large number of participants without coordination complexities ("crowding problem");*

2. They meet the characteristics of the production processes:

- *Complementarity of contributions;*
- *Convergence of contributions;*
- *Repartition between the individual and collective learning.*

Possible directions for future studies: IPRs within production process.

- First step (this paper):
free licences as coordination mechanism stimulating learning, « learning mechanism ».
- Second step:
free licences as « incentive mechanism ».
- Third step:
the link between incentive mechanism and learning
or
***interconnected nature of two aspects of knowledge creation:
IPRs and the evolution of cooperation.***