**Media Attention**

Media coverage of a foreign country measures how important a country is to its reporting country, in particular, to the public. That is, the public learns the importance of objects based on the amount of coverage that those objects receive. Agend-setting theory suggest that mass media serve as one of the key sources for public perception of important issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). More specifically, as Lang and Lang (1966) observe, “The mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up public imags of political figures. They are constatnly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass hsould think about, know about, have feelings about” (p. 468). Since their seminal work, hundreds of studies have examined this media effect on the public. The vast majority support this agenda-setting notion (need some more extention or citations here).

The focus of agenda-setting literature has been political figures or political issues. To extend this logic, media salience indicates signifiance for foreign countries named in media. Wanta et al. (2004) show coverage of foreign nations in the news influences how important these nations are viewed to be by individuals: the more coverage a state received, the more likey respondents think the state was vitally important to the U.S..

*[Need some transition from the public to the news editors; in this story, we take news outlets as strategic actors here.]*

From the perspectives of news outlets, limited by time and space, editors can only select a handful of stories while leaving dozens of new stories off the air. News selection is at the heart of the agenda-setting process since the issues that fail to pass through the gatekeepers of the news also fail to give salience cues regrading the relative importance of the issues.

Also, previous findings support the strategic consideration of news editors. Not all countries in the world receive equal coverage. While most powerful core states consistently receive higher amounts of coverage from newscasts, small peripheral states remain largel uncovered. Golan and Wanta (2003)’s study examines how 138 elections held between 1998 and 2000 were covered by U.S. network telvision newscasts (ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN). They found that out of 138 elections, only 8 received coverage from all four newscasts, while 102 received zero news coverage. Elections in Europe, Asia or the Middle East received substantial coverage than those in Latin America and Africa.