Single Non-transferable Vote (SNTV)

October 11, 2023

POLS 222: Who Wins and Why? Electoral Systems in Comparative Perspective

Dr. Isaac Hale Fall Semester, 2023



Outline

- 1. SNTV defined
- 2. SNTV mechanics
- 3. Party strategy & SNTV
- 4. SNTV IRL
- 5. SNTV case study: Japan
- 6. SNTV evaluated
- 7. Worksheets 2+3

Defining SNTV

Ballot Type & M

- So far, we've seen...
- Categorical ballots + M=1 districts
 E.g. FPTP
- Categorical ballots + M>1 districts
 E.g. PR
- Ordinal ballots + M=1 districts
 E.g. AV
- Ordinal ballots + M>1 districts
 E.g. STV

Ready For a New System?

- List PR is the most common system using:
 - Categorical ballots
 - M>1 districts
- However, it is not the ONLY kind!
- "Single Non-Transferable Vote," aka SNTV
- Unlike list PR, SNTV is a *majoritarian* electoral system
- Unlike STV, voters do *not* rank candidates

The Mechanics of SNTV

- Single: voters cast a single vote for a candidate
- Non-transferable: each vote stays with that candidate
 Unlike STV
- This system uses M>1 districts
- The top M candidates win
- What do we call SNTV when M=1?

So, Who Uses SNTV?

Currently:

- Hong Kong
- Indonesia (Senate elections)
- Japan (some seats for upper chamber and some local elections)
- Kuwait
- Puerto Rico
- Taiwan (some local elections)
- Vanuatu

Formerly:

- Afghanistan (2005-2021)
- Japanese lower assembly chamber (1948-1993)
- Jordan (1993-2016)
- Libya (2012-2014)
- South Korea
- Taiwan (until 2008)



SNTV

SNTV Ballots From Japan







SNTV Mechanics

SNTV: the Effect on Candidates

- What happens as M increases?
- The share of the vote needed for a seat *tends* to decrease
- If M=4, what % of the vote "guarantees" a candidate a seat?
 Think of the Droop quota!

votes needed to win =
$$\left(\frac{\text{valid votes cast}}{\text{seats to fill} + 1}\right) + 1$$

- If M=9, what % of the vote "guarantees" a candidate a seat?
- Who is the main competition for a candidate in SNTV?

You Don't Need to Hit the Quota! (M=5)

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Goku	Super Saiyan	20.9%	?
Spike	Space Libertarian	20.9%	?
Faye	Space Libertarian	19.9%	?
Edward	Space Libertarian	19.4%	?
Vegeta	Super Saiyan	10.5%	?
Yugi	King of Games	8.4%	?

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Edward	Space Libertarian	19.4%	YES
Vegeta	Super Saiyan	10.5%	YES
Yugi	King of Games	8.4%	NO

You Don't Need to Hit the Quota! (Kuwait, M=10)

CONSTITUENCY 1 (as-Salimiya)		
Candidate	votes	====== %
Hassan Abdullah Johar	5,849	10.4
Yusuf Fahad al-Ghurayyeb	5,064	09.0
Ahmad Khalifa al-Shuhoomi	4,129	07.4
Hamad Ahmad Rouhuddine	3,783	06.7
Abdullah Jassem al-Mudhaf	3,437	06.1
Essa Ahmad al-Kandari *	3,398	06.1
Ali Abdulrasoul al-Qattan	3,320	05.9
Adnan Sayed Abulsamad *	3,052	05.4
Abdullah Mohammad al-Turaiji	2,472	04.4
Osama Essa al-Shaheen *	2,167	03.9
61 others	19,480	34.7
Total	56,151	

You Don't Need to Hit the Quota! (Afghanistan, M=5)

JUZJAN (5 members, of whom 1 female)		
Population (2015): Estimated voters: Estimated turnout:	540,255 151,000 55,234	36.4
Candidate	Votes	%
Haji Bator Dostum Baktash Eshchi Mohammad Karim Jawzjani Azizullah Ulfati Halima Sadaf Karimi (F) 25 others	19,782 6,802 4,151 3,352 1,134 20,013	35.8 12.3 07.5 06.1 02.1 36.2
Total	55,234	

- Let's consider: is SNTV a "simple" system, by the Shugart & Taagepera definition?
- Are all seats won in districts?
- Does it violate the rank-size principle?
- SNTV has very simple mechanics!
- But the effects and incentives it yields could not be more complex

Party Strategy & SNTV

Party Strategy & Vote Coordination

- Remember how parties in OLPR and STV try to "game the system"?
 - In OLPR, by running celebrity candidates
 - In STV, by coordinating partisan voters
- Parties in SNTV do both
 - Part of the problem in Afghanistan? Very weak party system
- Vote coordination under SNTV is very difficult
 - Parties with loyal voters and highly organized party machines are rewarded

Coordination Problem: SNTV (M=3, Shire District)

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Frodo	2 nd Breakfast	45%	?
Samwise	2 nd Breakfast	5%	?
Saruman	Magic is OP	14%	?
Gandalf	Magic is OP	16%	?
Legolas	Fellowship	12%	?
Gimli	Fellowship	8%	?

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2nd Breakfast & Fellowship Coordinate (M=3)

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Frodo	2 nd Breakfast	26%	?
Samwise	2 nd Breakfast	24%	?
Saruman	Magic is OP	14%	?
Gandalf	Magic is OP	16%	?
Legolas	Fellowship	18%	?
Gimli	Fellowship	2%	?

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Party Strategy & Vote Coordination

 Wait, each party's vote share was <u>exactly</u> the same in both scenarios!

No party coordination

2nd Breakfast & Fellowship coordinate

Party	Vote %	Seats Won
2 nd Breakfast	50%	1
Magic is OP	30%	2
Fellowship	20%	0

Party	Vote %	Seats Won
2 nd Breakfast	50%	2
Magic is OP	30%	0
Fellowship	20%	1

All Parties Coordinate (M=3)

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Frodo	2 nd Breakfast	26%	?
Samwise	2 nd Breakfast	24%	?
Saruman	Magic is OP	2%	?
Gandalf	Magic is OP	28%	?
Legolas	Fellowship	18%	?
Gimli	Fellowship	2%	?

All Parties Coordinate (M=3)

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Frodo	2 nd Breakfast	26%	YES
Samwise	2 nd Breakfast	24%	YES
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Coordination Errors

- Three main types of strategic error under SNTV
- 1. Vote division error
 - This was the mistake that 2nd Breakfast made
- 2. Overnomination
 - This was the mistake that Fellowship initially made
- 3. Undernomination
 - Let's see an example

Undernomination Error

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Frodo	2 nd Breakfast	50%	YES
Saruman	Magic is OP	2%	NO
Gandalf	Magic is OP	28%	YES
Legolas	Fellowship	18%	YES
Gimli	Fellowship	2%	NO

Coordination & Clientelism

Coordination is key under SNTV

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- A common solution to the coordination problem is some form of clientelism
- Clientelism is a sort of quid-pro-quo relationship between politicians and constituents
- What separates clientelism from something like pork barrel spending is the degree to which it is *focused*.

What If the Election Used List PR?

- Shire District
- M=3
- D'Hondt

Caller and the second sec	
Those	

2 nd Breakfast	Magic is OP	Fellowship
50	30	20
25	15	10
16.67	10	

 SNTV approximates list PR when the parties perfectly manage their votes

What if the District Used OLPR, D'hondt (M=3)

Candidate	Party	Vote %	Wins seat?
Frodo	2 nd Breakfast	45%	?
Samwise	2 nd Breakfast	5%	?
Saruman	Magic is OP	14%	?
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SNTV IRL



SNTV in Vanuatu

- Tanna District, 2002
- M =7
- Total votes cast: 10,363



Party	% votes	# seats	% seats
Union of Moderate Parties (UMP)	17.6	3	42.9
National United Party (NUP)	16.5	1	14.3
Vanuaaku Party (VP)	15.2	2	28.6
Greens Confederation (GC)	14.7	1	14.3
People's Progressive Party (PPP)	6.4	0	0
Meanesian Progressive Party (MPP)	4.9	0	0
Others	23.9	0	0

					Party vote	Party
Candidate name	Party	Votes	Elected	Party seats	sum	candidates
Joe Natuman	VP	910	yes	2	1579	2
Morking Stevens	NUP	812	yes	1	1710	3
Jimmy Nicklam	VP	669	yes	2	1579	2
Willie Posen	UMP	627	yes	3	1829	3
Isaac Judah	UMP	608	yes	3	1829	3
Francois Koapa	UMP	594	yes	3	1829	3
Keasipai Song	GC	534	yes	1	1519	4
Moses Kahu		497		0	497	1
John Nipiau	PPP	477		0	668	2
Johnny Lava Napilepile		458		0	458	1
Richard Tapo	NUP	449		1	1710	3
Harry lauko	NUP	449		1	1710	3
Willie Lop		432		0	432	1
Harris Naunun	GC	415		1	1519	4
Simon Koukare		330		0	330	1
Yauko Henry	MPP	325		0	504	2
Tausi Barnabas		321		0	321	1
Willie Toama	GC	312		1	1519	4
Nanua George	GC	258		1	1519	4
Peter Jeremiah	VRP	200		0	200	1
David Hosea	PPP	191		0	668	2
lala Nipio	MPP	179		0	504	2
Peter Etap		147		0	147	1
Masel Wilson Manua		120		0	120	1
Jonny Katu		36		0	36	1
Jack Kapum		13		0	13	1 16

What If this D'istrict Used D'hondt?

- Tanna District, 2002
- M=7
- Total votes cast: 10,259



UMP	NUP	VP	GC	PPP	MPP	Others
1829	1710	- 1579 -	- 1519 -	668	504	2450
914.5	855	789.5	759.5	334	252	
609.67	570	526.33	506.33	222.67	168	
457.25	427.5	394.75	379.75	167	126	

What If this District Used D'hondt?

- Tanna District, 2002
- M=7
- Total votes cast: 10,363



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Union of Moderate Parties (UMP)	17.6	2	28.6
National United Party (NUP)	16.5	2	28.6
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Greens Confederation (GC)	14.7	1	14.3
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Meanesian Progressive Party (MPP)	4.9	0	0
Others	23.9	0	0

Comparing the Outcomes

- Tanna District, 2002
- M=7
- Total votes cast: 10,363



Party	% votes	# seats (if D'hondt)	Actual # seats (SNTV)
Union of Moderate Parties (UMP)	17.6	2	3
National United Party (NUP)	16.5	2	1
Vanuaaku Party (VP)	15.2	2	2
Greens Confederation (GC)	14.7	1	1
People's Progressive Party (PPP)	6.4	0	0
Meanesian Progressive Party (MPP)	4.9	0	0
Others	23.9	0	0



SNTV in Taiwan

- Taichung County, 2001
- M=11
- Total votes cast: 10,363



Party	% votes	# seats (if D'hondt)	Actual # seats (SNTV)
Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)	34.7	5	4
Kuomintang (KMT)	31.5	4	5
People's First Party (PFP)	18.7	2	1
Independents	5.1	0	1
Taiwan Solidarity Union	4.6	0	0

Hale					SNTV
					narty
Candidate name	Party	Votes	Elected	Party seats	candidates
Guo,Jyun-Ming	DPP	78620	yes	4	5
Feng,Ding-Guo	PFP	56020	yes	1	4
Ciou, Tai-San	DPP	42048	yes	4	5
Yang,Cyong-Ying	KMT	41223	yes	5	6
Syu, Jhong-Syong	KMT	40987	yes	5	6
Lin,Fong-Si	DPP	40530	yes	4	5
Jian, Jhao-Dong	DPP	38791	yes	4	5
Yan,Cing-Biao	Independent	34003	yes	1	1
Liou,Cyuan-Jhong	KMT	32954	yes	5	6
Yang,Wun-Sin	KMT	32841	yes	5	6
Ji,Guo-Dong	KMT	30821	yes	5	6
Wang-Dai,Chun-Man	TSU	30361		0	1
Wang,Li-Ping	DPP	29910		4	5
Lin, Yao-Sing	KMT	29832		5	6
Jhang,Li-Jie	PFP	24283		1	4
Wu,He-Peng	PFP	24048		1	4
Guo,Rong-Jhen	Independent	23689		0	1
He,Yu-Cing	PFP	19068		1	4
Li,Cing-Yuan	New Party(NP)	10446		0	1
Wu,Cing-Si	Independent	880		0	1
Liao, Jhao-Syong	Independent	314		0	1

SNTV Case Study: Japan

Rosenbluth & Thies







Political Change and Economic Restructuring

Frances McCall Rosenbluth and Michael F. Thies

"The Old Japanese Politics, 1955-1993"

- From 1955-1993, the LDP ruled Japanese politics nonstop
 - Big tent conservative party
 - Pro-USA
- The end of LDP rule would also herald electoral reform
 - We will learn about the new system, Mixed-member majoritarian representation (MMM), in one week!
- How did the LDP hold onto power for so long?
 - The "economic miracle"
 - **SNTV**, and the LDP's mastery of it

SNTV

Consider: the 1979 Japanese General Election

	Party \$	Votes \$	% ♦	Seats \$	+/- \$
	Liberal Democratic Party	24,084,131	44.59	248	-1
	Japan Socialist Party	10,643,450	19.71	107	-16
	Japanese Communist Party	5,625,528	10.42	39	+22
	Kōmeitō	5,282,683	9.78	57	+2
	Democratic Socialist Party	3,663,692	6.78	35	+6
	New Liberal Club	1,631,812	3.02	4	-13
	Socialist Democratic Federation	368,660	0.68	2	New
	Other parties	69,101	0.13	0	_
	Independents	2,641,064	4.89	19	-2
Total		54,010,121	100.00	511	0

- This is a "typical" result in this period
- Gov. formed with conservative independents

Aichi District 4 In 1990

	Aichi, district 4; M=4 Total votes: 662,510				
Candidate	Party	votes (%)	won?		
Kawashima Minoru	CGP	151968 (22.9)	Yes		
Ito Eisei	DSP	134793 (20.3)	Yes		
Sugiura Seiken	LDP	125688 (19.0)	Yes		
Urano Yauoki	LDP	116470 (17.6)	Yes		
Inagaki Jitsuo	LDP	112537 (17.0)	No		
Omura Yoshinori	JCP	21054 (3.2)	No		

The SNTV Dilemma

"Under SNTV, any party seeking to win two or more seats in a district would have to nominate as many or more candidates, but then, crucially, the party's supporters could not simply vote for the party but would be forced to choose among those copartisan candidates. This made same-district copartisans the bitterest of rivals engaged in cutthroat competition for the same types of voters." – Rosenbluth & Thies

- Average M=4
- How does the LDP, the largest party, solve this problem?
- How about the opposition parties?

SNTV and Patronage Networks

- SNTV in Japan incentivized candidates not to campaign on ideological disagreements
- What did it motivate?
- Personalism:
 - Constituent service
 - Pork-barrel spending
 - Favors for voters
 - "scores of weddings, funerals, and birthday parties, always armed with generous gifts."
- Could votes be *literally* "bought"?

LDP Success and Opposition Failure

- Prolonged LDP rule meant they set election rules
- SHORT campaign seasons
- Few opportunities for candidates to share ideological messages or build name ID
 - TV and radio ads outlawed
 - Each candidate given two 5-minute slots on TV during the campaign
- The LDP didn't need to build its brand or communicate its ideology
 - But the opposition **desperately** needed to

Hale

LDP Vote Management

- Remember how Irish parties manage their votes under STV?
- Nobody managed votes like the LDP under SNTV!
- LDP candidates would join factions, and each *faction* would back one candidate in a district
- LDP candidates tended not to compete over policy, but over patronage networks
- Other parties failed to generate similar (very expensive!) networks, and tended not to run multiple candidates in a district



- The LDP was aware of the system's problems
- In 1970, LDP PM Eisaku Satō assigned a party committee to propose a new electoral system to "produce party-centered, policycentered campaigns."

SNTV Grew Out of Favor

- The opposition had good reason to hate SNTV
- But even LDP MPs tired of the consequences
 - Corruption & personalism
- Polls in Japan in the 1990s showed "money politics" and corruption were voters' primary electoral complaints
- Also blamed for incentivizing bad policies:
 - High consumer prices
 - Low consumer choice
 - Unnecessary regulations

MPs in the Diet Soured on SNTV Too

Table 7.1. Diet Members' Attitudes Toward Electoral Systems in Japan

	Keep SNTV (%)	Change to MMM (%)
April 1984	50.8	19.9
March 1987	43.2	27.6
March 1988	40.7	24.1
March 1989	22.6	29.9
April 1993	12.2	55.2

Sources: Yomiuri Shimbun, March 18, 1989; April 24, 1993.

SNTV

Pictured: SNTV in Japan (1993)

Everyone disliked that.



SNTV Evaluated

SNTV and Proportionality

- M>1, so does this system yield proportional outcomes?
- NO
- Unlike list PR, there is no formula to tie party's vote shares to seat shares
- However, proportionality *still* tends to increase as M goes up
 Friendlier to small parties than FPTP
- Proportionality is *contingent* on parties having accurate information and avoiding coordination errors

The Effects of SNTV

- Party fragmentation
- Intraparty competition
- Candidates > parties
- Unlike with OLPR, candidates do <u>not</u> directly benefit from their party's overall performance
- They don't even indirectly benefit, like copartisans tend to under STV

SNTV in Afghanistan



€ A Watch later Share

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🖙 🌣 YouTube

Video source: Democracy International

59/66

The Pros of SNTV

- More parties tend to compete and win seats compared to FPTP
 - In other words, N_s and N_v higher than under FPTP
- SNTV encourages strong party organization
- Independent candidates are highly relevant and competitive
- It is an easy system to understand mechanically

The Cons of SNTV

- Parties that are spread out do worse than parties that are geographically concentrated (like FPTP)
- This system tends to significantly benefit the largest party (like FPTP)
- Internal party fragmentation and clientelism
- Who gets seats often comes down less to voters, more to party strategy + vote management
- Unlike STV, parties don't have much incentive to appeal broadly to the electorate
- Lots of votes get wasted

MONDAY: Special POLS 222 Event!

Australia's Voice to Parliament Referendum

- Australians will vote on Saturday on creating a new advisory body to represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- This would **not** be an empowered legislature
- Voice members would be chosen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- The Voice would advise and make "recommendations" to the parliament



Hale



Worksheets 2/3 + Q&A