# Codebook

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## The House of Commons Speech Database, 1979 – 2019

### Overview

This repository holds links to and explanations of a database of speeches delivered in the UK House of Commons between 3rd May 1979 and 5th November 2019. This data was compiled as an output of ESRC grant number ES/N016297/1, which was for a project entitled "Measuring Political Debate: Responsiveness, Influence, and Rhetoric in Parliamentary Texts".

The dataset consists of speeches made in the UK House of Commons between 1979 and 2019. The full data includes over 2 million individual utterances, and you can download the data as a series of yearly .csv files from UK data services permanent hosting site. The data is available at this page.

### Data sources

- Speech data comes from TheyWorkForYou.com as accessed via the twfyR package
- Data on roles that MPs held in government, opposition, and in committee comes from the Members Name Data Platform and the Parliamentary Data Platform as accessed via the pdpy package
- Data on election results comes from www.electoralcalculus.co.uk

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Each file in the data include all speeches made in the House of Commons in the space of a calandar year. In each file, the following variables are included:

Variable Name	Description
person_id	The MP's unique identifier (corresponds to IDs used in TheyWorkForYou)
mnis_person_id	An alternative MP identifier (corresponds to IDs used in the Members
	Name Information Service)
member_id	A unique identifier for each MP's term in parliament (may be multiple
	member_ids for each person_id)
name	Name of the MP
constituency	Constituency of the MP
entered_house	Date on which the MP entered the House of Commons
left_house	Date on which the MP left the House of Commons
date_of_birth	Birthday of the MP
age_years	Age of the MP in years
gender	Gender of the MP
days_in_house	Number of days that the MP had been an MP at the time of giving the
	speech
party	Party of the MP
party_short	Party of the MP (recoded)
<pre>government_party_mp</pre>	Indicator for whether the MP was a member of a current governing party
epobject_id	Unique identifier for speech
section_id	Debate identifier
subsection_id	Sub-debate identifier
hpos	Position in debate of speech

Variable Name	Description
hdate	Date of speech
body	Text of speech
parent	Title of debate
question_time	Indicator for whether the debate is a Question Time session
n_words	Number of words in speech
<pre>government_role_X</pre>	Whether the MP currently holds a government role (and whether the role requires attending cabinet/is paid or unpaid). MPs sometimes hold more than one role, hence the indexing.
attends_cabinet	Indicator for whether an MP currently holds a government role that requires them to attend cabinet
<pre>government_ministerial_pos</pre>	siNtaione_Xif the government role held by the MP indicated in
	<pre>government_role_X.</pre>
holds_government_position opposition_role_X	Indicator for whether an MP currently holds any government role Whether the MP currently holds an opposition role (and whether the role requires attending shadow cabinet/is paid or unpaid). MPs sometimes hold more than one role, hence the indexing
opposition ministerial pos	siNaione_Mf the opposition role held by the MP indicated in
opposition_ministration_pos	opposition_role_X.
holds opposition position	Indicator for whether an MP currently holds any opposition role
committee_name_X	Name of the committee (if any) on which the MP currently serves. MPs sometimes hold more than one committee position, hence the indexing.
committee_type_X	Type of committee indicated in committee_name_X
has_committee_assignment	Indicator for whether an MP currently holds any committee assignment
committee_chair_nameX	Name of the committee (if any) on which the MP is currently Chair. MPs sometimes Chair more than one committee, hence the indexing.
committee_chair_type_X	Type of the committee indicated in committee_chair_nameX
is_committee_chair	Indicator for whether the MP is currently Chair of a committee
speaker_role	The type of speaker role held by an MP (if any)
is_speaker	Indicator for whether the MP currently holds one of the Speaker or Deputy Speaker roles in the Commons
votes_XXX	The number of votes won by the relevant party at the last election in the relevant MP's constituency (does not include by-election results)
pct_XXX	The percentage of the vote won by the relevant party at the last election in the relevant MP's constituency (does not include by-election results)