

## Modelling Technocratic Speech and Argumentation in Parliamentary Debates 1918-2010

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Literature ↓



### Question

The roots for populist discontent are often located in the rise of technocratic institutions (Esmark, 2016).

Technocracy is only studied as a clearly defined idea or a institutional regime-type: two externalist approaches that define the technocratic as something distinctly different and hostile to the democratic. This obscures the way technocracy operates as a mode of political reasoning.

This project asks:

DID 20TH CENTURY POLITICAL DEBATE EXPERIENCE  
**TECHNOCRATIZATION?**

### Approach

Technocracy poses a problem to the history of political thought. It is not (always) a clearly identifiable concept or an intentionally employed idea.

Instead, the project conceptualizes technocracy as a **political grammar**, since “every statement always already entails a given grammar that establishes the conditions of its articulation and provides its definite meaning” (Palti, 2014).

By studying technocracy as a political grammar, it’s rise and influence can be studied without seeing technocracy as a regime-type hostile to democracy.

### Data

The project uses the digitized proceedings of the **Dutch First and Second Chambers and the British House of Lords and House of Commons from the period between 1918 and 2018**.

The data consist of full-text proceedings, accompanied by various metadata on speakers, parties, the structure of debates and their topic. The data is also enriched with POS-tags and Named Entities.

See: <https://www.clarin.eu/resource-families/parliamentary-corpora>

### Methods

To study systematically the manifestations of technocratic language in parliamentary debates, and to push text analysis methods beyond the bag-of-words, **the project applies argument mining to historical data**.

Computational argument-mining is often based on so-called “argument schemes”: typologies of argumentation forms. This project uses the recently developed **Periodic Table of Arguments** (PTA) to recognize arguments in parliamentary debate (Wagemans, 2019).

An argument recognition model will be trained on Dutch and British debates. The identified arguments will be combined with metadata on speakers, parties, and the structure of debates. Also, **the arguments will be combined with frequency analysis and word embeddings**. In this way, the hypothesized rise of technocratic reasoning in political debate can be investigated.

### Pipeline

