

Is Silence Golden?
Evidence from Re-Election of Japan's Prefectural Assembly Members

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This paper is an inquiry into the re-election of Japan's prefectural assembly members and investigates if their visibility in the plenary session deliberations is a determinant of the outcome of their re-election campaign. This visibility is measured by the volume of their speech during the immediately preceding term, which is tabulated from the local assembly transcripts. The use of the prefectural assembly transcripts is the methodological innovation of this paper, and allows an examination into the importance of law-makers' participation in the policy-making. The empirical analysis of re-election of incumbent legislators suggests that speech volume is a factor for the electoral success for the assembly members with multiple terms.