

The Sounds of Institutional Facts

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Searle offers three arguments supporting the view that institutional facts are language dependent. One, institutional thoughts are too complex to be held without language. Two, institutional facts would remain invisible if they were not publicly represented by means of some linguistic symbols. Three, the changes that are brought about each time an institutional fact obtains could not take place if those thoughts were not sub-types of speech acts, namely declarations, the latter being characterized by an external, non-psychological, side in virtue of which uttering them is doing something. The paper reviews these arguments, shows what is wrong with the first two, and proposes a few refinements to the third one.