

Summary

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Individual Intentions and Cultural Conventions (Silence as Abnormative Performativity)

The subject of this text is silence as an element of social communication, considered in its performative and normative aspects. The author classifies types of silence in reference to John L. Austin's concept of performative speech acts and to commentators on that concept (Peter Strawson). She presents examples of silence as communicative and performative actions in public life in Poland and indicates the importance of performativity to sociological research. She is furthermore concerned with the normative and abnormative character of silence in communication: that is, why silence is considered an *usus*, a kind of communication that is becoming a recurring model but is not yet a norm. Austin considered cultural conventions as normative rules of action, taking into account the plurality of cultural contexts and asking how individual intention is realized within conventions and how it changes them. Austin indicated silence as an example of performativity that is specifically comprehended as abstention from acting. Perhaps the issue of silence is part of the issue of performativity, which allows the performative and non-performative elements of communication to be delimited. The present text lists types of silence (e.g., silent agreement, ritual silence, silence as an act of resistance, concealment, becoming silent) and aspects of silence (ontological, ethical, aesthetical, political, precisely communicative). The performativity of silence is also confronted with the metaphors of silence, which is important when the silence occurs "instead of" another act of communication, in the replacement role of metaphor or metonymy.

Key words: performativity, convention, intention, silent agreement, concealment, becoming silent, metaphors