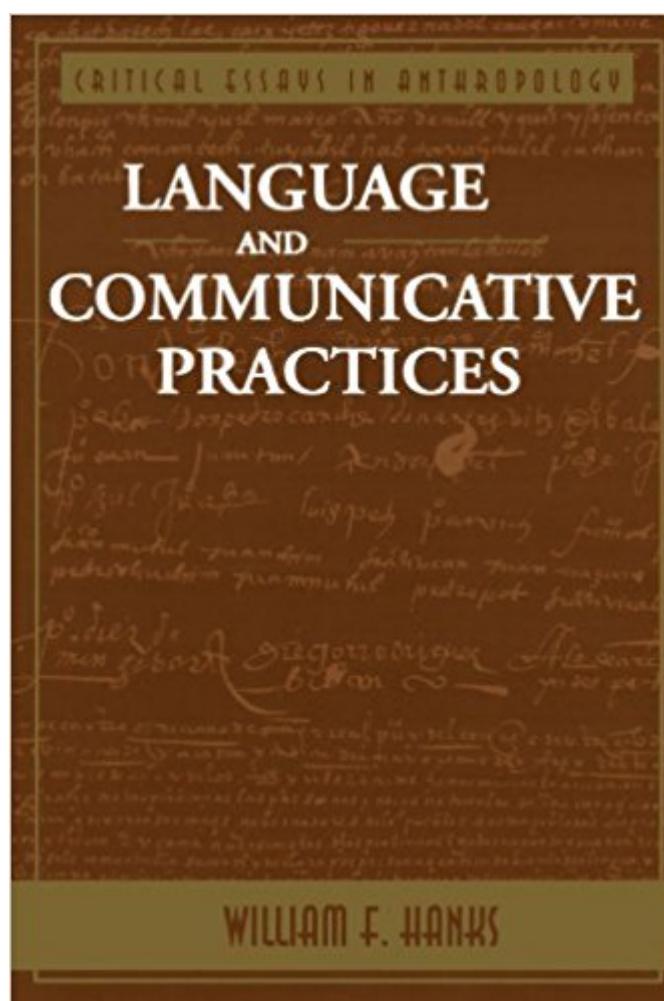


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# Language And Communicative Practices (Critical Essays In Anthropology)



## Synopsis

Written in an informal style with engaging examples, this introduction to the study of language in context presents a provocative new approach to communicative practice. Emphasizing the dual status of language as linguistic system and as social fact, William Hanks offers fresh insights into the dynamics of context, the indeterminacy of cultural forms, and the relation between human experience and the making of meaning. Drawing on a broad range of theory and empirical research, Hanks explores the varieties of reflexivity in language, relating them to linguistic structure, textuality, and genres of practice. He shows how the human body both anchors the communicative process and provides a reference point for displaced and mediated speech. Tracing the movement of meaning through social fields and communities, Hanks casts new light on the ways that utterances are fragmented and objectified in social life. Speech emerges as a contingent process in which the production and reception of meaning are tied into multiple dimensions of time and context and history rests on the objectification of practice. Hanks's penetrating readings of classic works in linguistics, philosophy, and social theory are complemented by suggestions for further reading. Within the framework of communicative practice, he integrates elements of formal grammar and semiotics, phenomenology, cultural anthropology, and contemporary sociology. Neither a history nor a summary of the field, *Language and Communicative Practices* is a critical synthesis of the dialectics of meaning that inform all language and speech.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

William F. Hanks is professor of anthropology and linguistics at the University of Chicago. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Paris, L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, and Casa de America in Madrid.

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