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By Nancy Bonvillian



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Nancy Bonvillian focuses on analyzing communicative interactions, revealing how social relations are produced and reproduced through speech. The text also highlights the analysis of language ideologies, that is, the beliefs that people have about language structure itself, about language usage, and about appropriate norms for producing and evaluating speech.

This 7th edition contains updated information throughout as well as several new sections. Examples of language practices in African societies have also been added.

Learning Goals

Upon completing this book, readers will be able to:

- Recognize reputation and pattern in human speech.
- Understand the formation and structure of language.
- Have a strong understanding of the use of rhetoric in communication.



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“The chapter on the Ethnography of Communication is especially strong and lays the foundations for the rest of the book. I would not cut a thing from this book. The existing chapters are excellent .”

- *Sean O'Neill*, University of Oklahoma

About the Author

Nancy Bonvillain is a professor of anthropology and linguistics at Bard College at Simon's Rock. She is author of over twenty books on language, culture, and gender, including a series on Native American peoples. In her field work she studied the Mohawk and Navajo, and she has published a grammar and dictionary of the Akwesasne dialect of Mohawk. She received her PhD from Columbia University in 1972 and has taught at Columbia University, The New School, SUNY Purchase and Stonybrook, and Sarah Lawrence College.

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