Dr. Buck, Assistant Professor  
Office: Coleman Hall 339E  
Telephone: Office: 581-5012 (Please leave voice mail if I'm not there)  
Mailbox: English Dept Office, Room 308 Coleman  
Office Hours: 12:50-1:30 MWF and by appointment  
Required textbooks at TRS: Language: The Social Mirror by Elaine Chaika and Language Awareness by Eschholz, Rosa, and Clark.

Course Objective
In this course, we will examine the structural, social, psychological, and historical aspects of language. We will be looking at issues that apply across language families, but we will focus on aspects of American English in particular. We will read and discuss the work of a number of scholars and try to apply their perceptions to problems in our study of language.

Course Evaluation
Grade for the course will be based on weekly folder assignments, a series of in-class quizzes (sometimes unannounced), a research paper and a presentation on that paper. The paper project will consist of several parts in process (see the attached schedule for precise dates). The final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:
folder assignments 25%  
quizzes 35%  
presentation, proposal, and bibliography 10%  
Paper I and Revised Paper I 30%

Grading Scale in this course is always 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; below 60% = F.

Active Attendance
I will be expecting you to attend every class because teaching/learning requires dialogue and without you we can have no dialogue. Our class work on the analysis and discussion of linguistic utterances is a crucial part of this course. Come to class ready to articulate your knowledge and formulate your questions for the class. (Please be on time for class; habitual tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful of other class members.)

An absence policy is important so that I can be equitable to all members of the class and so that you will be successful in this class. Please note that more than five unexcused absences in this course is grounds for failing this course.
Definition of an excused absence:
1. University obligation, in which case you will need to present me in advance with a letter explaining the purpose and date of your upcoming absence.
2. Emergency or medical illness, in which case you will need to call my answering machine at 581-5012 on the day of your absence to let me know that you will not be in class.
   If you are absent, I will expect you to find out from someone in the class what you've missed so that you'll be prepared for the next class meeting. Worksheets and handouts will only be distributed once; it is your responsibility to photocopy assignments from another student if you are absent.
   Only students with an excused absence on the day of a quiz may take an alternative quiz, of different format, within the week of the scheduled quiz. Papers and other assignments are due on the designated dates. No late work will be accepted unless for excused reasons.
Where to Go For Help with this Course
1. Please always feel free to meet with me in 339E Coleman Hall during office hours (and by appointment) or call me if you would like more individualized discussion of your work and progress in this course.
2. If you would like help with the writing process of your research paper, go to the Writing Center, CH 301, where graduate students can help you with planning, drafting, revising your papers. Their phone number is 581-5929.

Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Folder Writing Assignments
You will need to purchase a manilla folder for this class. That is where you will be keeping all your materials for the class. Please always bring your folders to class.

Folder writing assignments are a large part of this course. For each weekly reading, you will be asked to bring to class a response to the reading in which you may do any of several different kinds of things. You may bring in a personal response, in which you attempt to connect the reading with your own life or interests in some way. Or you may choose to write about a connection you make between the reading and some other previous reading you have done, perhaps in another class. You might write about how the text challenges former assumptions or beliefs you held. You might write about particular examples where you have seen some of the principles put in practice. You might want to write about anything that unsettles or disturbs you. Or you might use the writing to explore a particular issue that you find intellectually difficult to understand or you may use it as a way of articulating questions that you have. Once in a while I may direct your responses, but otherwise you may assume that you have the choice to pursue any direction you choose.

A folder response is a minimum of two pages in length (weekly) and will be evaluated on how well you have thought about the reading material. You must write in full sentences and in paragraphs (notes will not be accepted), but you need not worry about thesis or tight organization. Getting your thoughts down on paper is the object of the exercise.

I will occasionally collect your responses but even after I have done so you should keep them all in your folder until the two designated dates on the syllabus.

Folder assignments may be handwritten, but must be legible. If I cannot read them, I have no choice but to give a no-credit grade.

Paper Project and Presentation
You may pursue any type of project you like related to the study of language (this includes English, any type of world English, American English standard and non-standard dialects, issues related to language and thought, language and power, bilingualism, language and education, etc.). Bibliographic sources are listed at the end of each chapter of your textbooks. In your paper, you might consider 1) investigating a particular question/hypothesis you have; 2) developing a practical application; 3) analyzing a particular linguistic phenomenon; 4) responding to your research reading in such a way that you show how it is significant to an understanding of issues in the field. You will early on in the semester be required to turn in a detailed paper project proposal in which you 1) describe the topic that interests you, 2) discuss a particular angle or approach you are going to use as a way of focusing your thesis, 3) include a bibliography of approximately 15 sources on your focused topic.

The second part of your paper in process is your presentation, which should be an integrated summary/response to a good number of your sources. Your presentation should be your teaching to the class what is important about some of the reading you are doing on
your project (what you are learning that you think the class will be interested in hearing and that takes us beyond what we've said in our class discussions). You should do a hand-out (one page, two-sided) of your presentation for the class so that we can 1) understand in summary what you have learned, 2) see some analysis of concrete linguistic examples, historical events, or other relevant details, and 3) have a list of sources to read on your subject.

Your final paper will be evaluated on form as well as content. Documentation should be in MLA format following the guidelines of The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 4th edition (you can request a copy that is kept behind the desk in the reference room of the library). I expect a clear introduction in your paper, an explicit thesis, and conclusion, with a body that consists of carefully selected details to support your thesis. If you can, try to include specific linguistic phenomena (sample sentences, words, morphemes, sounds, discourse sequences) to support your points. The most important word in all this is selected information that is organized meaningfully around an intelligent argument. I do not want to know everything you've learned. Information that is not relevant but is included in your paper or information that is highly relevant to your argument but not included in your text will weaken your response (and ultimately your grade). This balancing act is the challenge of any worthwhile research paper.

I'm looking forward to working with you this semester on our study of language and linguistics.
**This schedule should be used as a guideline, but we are likely to make changes as we go along depending on the needs of the class.

Course Readings for English 3901

Weeks One and Two
Introduction to the course; Language and Thought
Chaika, pp. 51-56 and pp. 350-361
Hayakawa and Hayakawa, pp. 39-46, "Giving Things Names"
Jan 20 Holiday

Week Three
Language and Culture
Reserve Reading: "Language and Cultural Meaning" pp. 52-83 in Language, Culture, and Communication by Nancy Bonvillain

Week Four
Language and Power
Allport, pp. 287-297, "The Language of Prejudice"
Hayakawa and Hayakawa, pp. 298-304, "Words with Built-in Judgments"
Birk, pp. 47-55, "Selection, Slanting, and Charged Language"
Hentoff, "Speech Codes on the Campus and Problems of Free Speech"

Week Five
Verbal Taboo, Euphemism, and Propaganda
Postman, pp. 413-417, "Euphemism"
Hayakawa, pp. 418-421, "Verbal Taboo"
Lutz, pp. 59-69, "The World of Doublespeak"
Consumer Union, pp. 268-275, "It's Natural! It's Organic! or Is It?"
Feb 14 Holiday

Week Six
Language and Gender
Chaika, pp. 361-387; 394-402
Lawrence, pp. 422-425, "Four-Letter Words Can't Hurt You"
Nilsen, pp. 365-376, "Sexism in English: A 1990s Update"
Miller and Swift, pp. 377-388, "One Small Step for Genkind"
Reserve Reading: "Gender Differences in Communicative Competence," pp. 106-140 in Women, Men and Language by Jennifer Coates.

Week Seven
Non-verbal Communication
Chaika, pp. 123-151
Week Eight
PROPOSALS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES FOR PAPERS DUE MARCH 3
FOLDERS DUE MARCH 7
Style of Speech, Politeness Theory and Phatic Communion
Chaika, pp. 81-122
Morrow, pp. 135-139, "If Slang is not a Sin"

Week Nine
What is Language: How We Generate Sentences
Chaika, pp. 6-33
Farb, pp. 17-24, "The Story of Human Language"
Fromkin and Rodman, pp. 25-35, "What is Language?"

Week Ten: Spring Break

Week Eleven
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF PAPERS

Week Twelve
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF PAPERS
April 4 EIU hosts Illinois Philological Association Conference. Please attend. No class.

Week Thirteen
Bilingualism
Chaika, pp. 34-80
Ehrenreich, p. 327-330, "Drawing the Line"
Cunha, pp. 331-341, "Talking in the New Land"
Reserve Reading: Rodriguez, excerpts from Hunger of Memory
Reserve Reading: "Double-Talk and Double-Think: Bilingualism and Children's Development in School," pp. 35-50 in Empowering Minority Students by Jim Cummins

Week Fourteen
PAPER I DUE APRIL 7 (In class self-analysis and preparation for conference)
INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES ON PAPERS APRIL 16 and 18

Week Fifteen
Everybody Speaks a Dialect
Chaika, pp. 262-308
Crystal, pp. 101-107, "The Prescriptive Tradition"
MacNeil, pp. 140-144, "English Belongs to Everybody"

Week Sixteen
Language Attitudes
Chaika, pp. 336-349 and pp. 403-409
Seymour, pp. 122-134, "Black Children, Black Speech"
Jones, pp. 131-134, "What's Wrong with Black English?"

FOLDERS DUE MAY 2
PAPER I REVISED DUE MAY 5