Outline for Ph.D. Project Proposal

(adapted from Lynn Santelmann, 2001)

Advisor 1:
Advisor 2:

Working Title:

When writing, please use section headings to indicate where the information can be found. Subheadings need not be used, though in long sections they may facilitate organization.

1. Objective of the Research

Explain the issue you are examining and why it is significant.
• Describe the general area to be studied
• Explain why this area is important to the general area under study *(e.g., psychology of language, second language acquisition, teaching methods)*

2. Background/Review of the Literature

A description of what has already known about this area and short discussion of why the background studies are not sufficient.
• Summarize what is already known about the field. Include a summary of the basic background information on the topic gleaned from your literature review (you can include information from the book and class, but the bulk should be outside sources)
• Discuss several critical studies that have already been done in this area (cite according to APA style).
• Point out why these background studies are insufficient. In other words, what question(s) do they leave unresolved that you would like to study?
• Choose (at least) one of these questions you might like to pursue yourself. (Make sure you do not choose too many questions)

3. Hypotheses and Predictions

A description of the questions you are examining and an exploration of the claims.
- List the **specific** question(s) that you are exploring.
    o Explain how these research questions are related to the larger issues raised in the introduction.
    o Describe what specific claim, hypothesis, and/or model of psycholinguistics you will evaluate with these questions.
- Explain what it will show about the psychology of language if your hypothesis is confirmed.
- Explain what it will suggest about the psychology of language if your hypothesis is disconfirmed.

4. Method and Design

A description of how you would go about collecting data and test the questions your are examining. You are not required to come up with a new or original method (though you can

try!). Look journal articles to determine what methods are standardly used to assess knowledge of language in your chosen area and adapt one of these for your needs.

Method: How would you collect the data and why?

- Describe the general methodology you choose for your study, in order to test your hypothesis(es).
- Explain why this method is the best for your purposes.
- Participants: Who would you test and why?
- Describe the sample you would test and explain why you have chosen this sample. Include age, and language background and socio-economic information, if relevant to the design.
- Are there any participants you would exclude? Why, why not?

Design: What would the stimuli look like and why?
- Describe what kinds of manipulations/variations you would make or test for in order to test your hypothesis(es).
- Describe the factors you would vary if you were presenting a person with stimulus sentences.
- Explain how varying these factors would allow you to confirm or disconfirm your hypotheses.
- Explain what significant differences you would need to find to confirm or disconfirm your hypothesis(es). In particular, how could your hypothesis(es) be disconfirmed by your data?
- Controls: What kinds of factors would you need to control for in your study?
- Describe what types of effects would be likely to occur which would make your results appear to confirm, or to disconfirm your hypothesis(es).
- Describe how you can by your design rule out or control for apparent effects.

Procedure
- How are you going to present the stimuli?
- What is the participant in the experiment going to do?

Analysis
- How will you analyze the results?
- What kind of results would *confirm* your hypothesis?
- What kind of results would *disconfirm* your hypothesis

5. Significance and Conclusion

Discuss, in general, how your proposed research would lead to a significant improvement over the original studies, and how it would benefit the field. (In other words, why should someone care? If you were applying for money to do this, why would someone fund you? If you wanted to publish your results, why would they be interesting?)

6. References

Include all references in APA style.