

Term Project: Step 3

Research Prospectus

3) Formulate Research Prospectus laying out procedure for project. As soon as the topic has been decided and agreed upon by all of the parties, the group needs to work out the details of what is actually to be done, including why. This material should be collected in a draft of a **Research Prospectus** to be submitted by email to both instructors and cc'ed to all of the group members. All members of the group must approve the draft prospectus, though you may divide up the work of creating the prospectus however seems best among you. Submit the prospectus draft sometime *before* February 24.

Research Prospectus = a document laying out all of the crucial aspects of the project, including the following sections. This is basically the first step to a complete research paper, so if you want to get a feel for what these sections would turn into for a full research project, check out such periodicals as the *Journal of Phonetics*, since most articles follow the format used here.

a) Introduction & background. The first section needs to lay out crucial background knowledge about the topic of the project that is necessary to understand what the topic is, and why it might be interesting. The introduction should have the necessary information on each crucial aspect of the project, and it should end with a paragraph stating what the project is and what you intend to accomplish by it. Crucial aspects of the project include basic information about the language or variety (or varieties) that are being examined, and the relevant phonological structures. Other crucial aspects would be features of the project that you will work hard to control, because it is a central part of the question you are asking. E.g., if you are looking at second language learners, then what is their first language, and why does this matter? If you are looking at allophonic variation, then what is the received wisdom as to the distribution of the different variants and what triggers them? Etc.

b) Research question & hypotheses. State in a short section the exact questions you are attempting to answer, along with likely outcomes to your project and what the different outcomes would mean.

c) Methods

- *Subjects.* Who are you going to work with, and why? How many are you going to work with? Where are you going to get them?

- *Corpus.* What linguistic structures are you going to look at and why?

- *Procedure.* What are you going to have the subjects do (exactly)?

- *Analysis.* Once you have the records from the procedures, what are you going to do with them to find the answers to your original questions?

d) Division of labor. Who in the group is going to do what?

e) References. Give citation information for any previous work that you cite in the work.