**Introductions**

A Model for Research Article  
Introductions from John Swales

This section of the research article appears in every genre and discipline, whether experimental or theoretical.

**The 3 Moves of an Introduction in a Research Article described by Swales**

* John M. Swales analyzed hundreds of **introductions** in numerous different fields and found a similar structure.
* He labeled the 3 structures **“moves.”** The word **“moves”** demonstrates that the **introduction** is composed of three sections that flow into one another.
* Each move is contingent on the one that came before, and all are compulsory.
* Each move contains various **steps**.
* The **steps** are **not** compulsory. Depending on the research, the **moves** can contain one or more steps.

**Move 1- Establishing a territory - general**

**Step 1** – **Claiming Centrality**

* + Sets **boundaries** of present research.
  + Asks members of the community to accept that the research about to be reported is **significant** or within a **well-established research area**.

**Examples**:

*“Knowledge of xxx has great importance for…”*

*“Recently there has been wide interest in xxx.”*

*"The effect of X has been studied extensively…."*

*"X has received considerable attention…"*

**Step 2** – **Making a topic generalization**

Generally, falls into *one of two categories*:

**A)** **Statements about** **knowledge or practice**

*“There is now much evidence”*

*“A standard procedure for assessing has been…”*

*" The general features of …are well-known…"*

*"It is generally accepted that…"*

**B)** **Statements about** **phenomenon**

“*There are many situations which…”*

*“… is a common finding in patients with…”*

**Step 3 – Reviewing items of previous research**

* What has been found or who has found it
* Provides a specification of previous findings, attribution to the researchers who published those results, and a stance towards the finding themselves
* Some introductions begin with step 3.
* *Choice of literature cited should be directly related to the research question.*

Author synthesizes information, gives insight into areas of controversy, and leads up to the move which will point to an area that needs additional research

* **This should not simply be a list of previous studies in sentence form, but include connections and insight/conclusions about the previous work in the field.**

**Move Two – Establishing a Niche**

*In most cases only one step of move 2 appears in introductions.*

**Step 1 - Establishing a Niche– Counter-claiming**

Author claims something that is in **contrast** with what others have found.

* Commonly opens with an adversative **sentence-connector**. –However, nevertheless, yet, unfortunately and but.
* Verbs like: Challenged, failed

***Example*** *–Others have found X; however, our research demonstrates….*

**Step 2 - Establishing the Niche - Indicating a gap**

When establishing a **gap** – Examples of language - “Previous work suffers from some limitations.”

Gaps are often signaled by verbs – **suffer or limited to** or adjectival phrases like **time consuming, expensive, not** **sufficiently accurate**.

**Step 3 – Question raising**

This step is common in life sciences and social sciences.

***Example****: It is important to ascertain what the behavior of this substance is when subjected to heat. The question remains…*

**Step 4 – Continuing a tradition**

Author’s work extends existing finding.

***Example:*** *Our research expands on previous studies that deal with…*

*Hence, additional studies are needed…*

***Note: Following Move 2 should be a statement of the need/benefit of the research; e.g. Why fill this gap? Why ask/answer that question?***

***Move 2 can be cyclic***

*Niche establishment does not only occur at the end of a literature review, but may follow reviews of individual items, so that cycles of Move-1/step-3 and Move 2 recur.*

**Move 3 – Occupying the Niche**

*This is the move where the authors present their research.*

*Whenever Move 2 occurs, the ensuing Move 3 variously offers* ***to substantiate the******particular counter-claim*** *that has been made,* ***fill the******created gap****,* ***answer the specific questions*** *or follow the* ***established tradition****.*

***Step One is obligatory.***

**Step 1**

***Outlining the purposes or***

*In this step: The authors indicate their main purpose or purposes.*

*E.g. The main purpose of the present paper is to give…*

*The aim of the present study was…*

*The objective of the research was..*

***Announcing present research***

*The authors describe what they consider to be the main features of their research.*

*E.g. This paper reports on the result obtained…*

*This paper evaluates…*

*This study focuses on…*

*We attempt to…*

In both steps the opening step is a **promissory** statement, and is typically marked by the **absence of references** to previous research and **the use of demonstrative** **references to the present text**.

**Step 2 - Announcing principal findings**

*Step 2 follows step 1 with a summary announcement of principal findings.*

**Step 3 - Indicating research article structure.**

*Step 3 indicates in varying degrees of detail the structure, and occasionally, the content of the remainder of the RA. If step 3 occurs it is at the end of the introduction. Typical of computer science articles.*

(Steps 2 and 3 – existence of these steps is discipline related)

**Bridges**

In academic writing, "bridges" refer to the connections or transitions that link one idea, paragraph, or section to another within a text. These bridges serve several important purposes in scholarly writing:

**1. Logical Flow:** Bridges ensure that there is a smooth and coherent progression of ideas throughout the text. They help readers follow the author's line of reasoning and understand how different parts of the argument or discussion relate to each other.

**2. Coherence:** By explicitly connecting one idea to the next, bridges enhance the overall coherence of the writing. This makes the text more understandable and helps readers see the relationships between concepts.

**3. Transition**: They act as transitional devices that signal shifts between different parts of the paper, such as from the introduction to the main body, between paragraphs within the body, or from the main body to the conclusion.

**4.** **Integration of Sources:** In academic writing, bridges often play a crucial role in integrating sources effectively. They help authors smoothly incorporate citations, quotations, and references into their own arguments and discussions.

**5.** **Highlighting Significance**: Bridges can also underscore the significance of the information being presented or the relevance of one section to the broader context of the study or field.

*Overall, bridges in academic writing serve as crucial links that enable the seamless progression of ideas, ensuring that the reader can navigate through the text with clarity and comprehension.*