Research Article Introductions in English: Mind the Gap
(Adapted from: Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.)

In the Introduction to a research article, academic writers across disciplines (STEM fields, social sciences, humanities), typically accomplish the three moves[1] or purposes detailed below. While the moves are numbered (Swales, 1990), writers may execute them in any order—this is a heuristic not a template—and the moves may occur in cycles, particularly in lengthier manuscripts.

Move 1: Telling the Research Story: Summarizing the Conversation
The writer sets the context for the current research:
Step 1: Claiming Centrality (optional)
The writer asks the disciplinary community or members of the field to accept the current study as part of a significant or well-established research area. This step is used widely across disciplines.
and/or
Step 2: Making Topic Generalizations
The writer makes statements about current knowledge, practices, and/or phenomena.
and/or
Step 3: Reviewing Previous Research
The writer cites relevant literature. When citing others, academic writers use *integral citations* (the cited author's name appears in the sentence itself) or *non-integral citations* (the author's name occurs in parentheses, typically at the end of a clause or sentence, or as a numerical superscript).

Move 2: Identifying the Research Space: Listening for the Silence
The writer argues that there is a research deficit that needs to be addressed:
Step 1A: Counter-claiming
The writer refutes or challenges earlier research by making a counter-claim.
Step 1B: Indicating a Gap
The writer demonstrates that previous research does not address existing questions or problems.
Step 1C: Question-raising
The writer asks questions about the field, suggesting that more research needs to be done.
Step 1D: Continuing a Tradition
The writer presents the research as a useful extension of existing research.

Move 3: Inhabiting the Research Space: Joining the Conversation
The writer turns the research deficit addressesd in Move 2 into the *research space*:
Step 1A: Outlining Purposes
The writer indicates the main purpose(s) of the current research.
or
Step IB: Announcing Present Research
The writer describes the current research.
Step 2: Announcing Principal Findings (optional)
The writer presents the main conclusions of the research.
Step 3: Indicating the Structure of the Research Article (optional)
The writer previews the organization of the article for readers.

[1]The term "move" refers to a segment of text with an identifiable purpose or function (e.g., background; literature review; research question; and so on).